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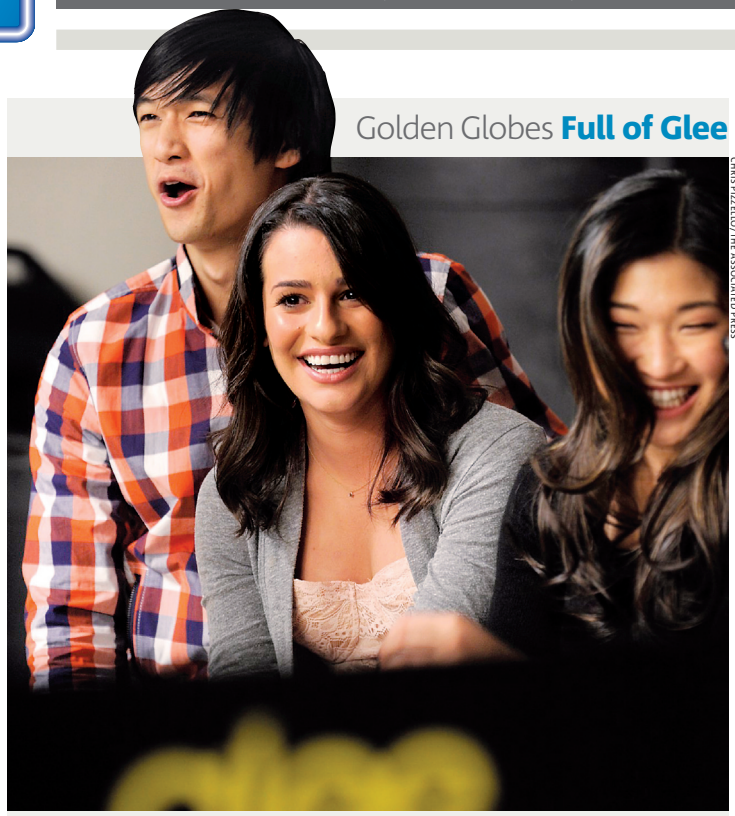
NYC gets artsy on safe sex

GET IT ON New York City wants to "keep people excited" about safe sex, and is sponsoring a contest for the design of the wrapper for the city's next official condom.

The city health department is inviting the public to submit suggestions for a special limited-edition design. The winning art will be featured on several hundred thousand official condom wrappers.

Officials say the artwork can't be raunchy and can't include copyright or trademark images. No Empire State Building images, please. Entries are due by Jan. 22. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Golden Globes **Full of Glee**



CHRIS PIZZELO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Glee cast members, from left, Harry Shum Jr., Lea Michele and Jenna Ushkowitz celebrate on the set yesterday after the show received four Golden Globes nominations, including Best Television Series — Comedy or Musical, at Paramount Studios in L.A. More coverage, page 52.

Winds of change

Miller says it's time for more turbines in Toronto

A wind farm at Toronto Island Airport?

Mayor David Miller, who used his opposition to airport expansion as a springboard in his first election campaign, suggested yesterday that it would be a good place to generate electricity.

Speaking from Copenhagen where he is attending the climate conference, Miller said Toronto could get much more energy from sources like wind power.

Speaking to reporters by phone, Miller said he's been impressed by the turbines he's seen offshore between Sweden and Denmark.

"I can tell you all of the City of Calgary's energy is going to come from wind by 2012," Miller said. "If you can do that in the middle of oil country, we can do that in Ontario, and particularly in Toronto."

Miller acknowledged that wind surveys have shown that other parts of the province probably have stronger, steadier winds that are more suitable for wind power. "But the wind turbine at Exhibition Place is near by a neighbourhood, and it's beautiful, and I never get anything but compliments about it," he said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MORE COVERAGE, PGS 12, 22

Go Green

Doctored Harper photo removed from Liberal website

The federal Liberal party has apologized for posting a doctored photo on its website that depicts Prime Minister Stephen Harper being assassinated.

The photo, right, — in which Harper's face was Photoshopped onto the famous picture of Jack Ruby gunning down Lee Harvey Oswald — was removed immediately after it began drawing public notice.

The photo had been part of a contest in which the party invited people to make up humorous pictures portraying the prime minister's reluctance to participate in the Copenhagen climate change summit.

The photos are "user-generated" and don't necessarily reflect the views of the party, said Liberal party spokesman Daniel Lauzon — still, they are supposed to be screened by the party before they're posted.

"That one admittedly slipped through the cracks," Lauzon said. "We removed it immediately and we apologize to anyone who was offended." THE CANADIAN PRESS

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News on the Move

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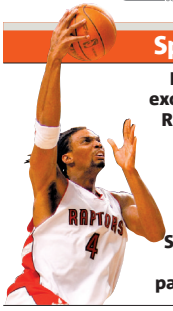
Sports



Link to exclusive Raptors game report and highlights. See the top of page 34.

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Local

Cops seek sex assault suspect

Police are searching for a 40-year-old man who they believe was involved in a sexual assault last week. A warrant was issued yesterday for the arrest of Henley George Brown, left, of Toronto. Brown is described as black, 5-foot-9, 160 pounds with thick lips. He has a short afro and a scar along his hairline. Anyone with information about Brown is asked to contact Crime Stoppers at 416-222-8477.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Tomorrow's Metro

Relating
Sofi Papamarko looks at how to conduct yourself at the office Christmas party.

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WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video A man who blames Ottawa for "destroying" his family finds a new home in Belgium after being deported from Canada at **metronews.ca/canada**

Blogs SpinDoctor on what Stephen Harper and Tiger Woods can teach us about poor scandal management

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Investigation lacking, inquiry finds

OPP's denial of pedophile ring in Cornwall can't be backed up, commissioner says

Rumours that swirled for years that children were abused at the hands of a pedophile ring in eastern Ontario were neither put to rest nor given credence yesterday by a $53-million public inquiry report four years in the making.

The Cornwall inquiry's official mandate was to examine institutional responses to historical claims of sexual abuse, and the sensational allegation that fuelled it went unresolved in the more than 1,600-page report.

"Throughout this inquiry I have heard evidence that suggested that there were cases of joint abuse, passing of alleged victims, and possibly passive knowledge of abuse," Commissioner G. Normand Glaude wrote.

"I want to be very clear that I am not going to make a pronouncement on whether a ring existed or not."

NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Attorney General Chris Bentley, left, and Minister of Community Safety Rick Bartolucci react while speaking to the media yesterday in Toronto regarding the final report from the public inquiry looking into historical events related to sexual abuse allegations in Cornwall.

The Ontario Provincial Police spent four years investigating allegations of sexual abuse, an investigation Glaude criticized in the report. Police laid 115 charges against 15 people under Project Truth, though only one was convicted.

The police declared there was no evidence of a ring, but that failed to quell the suspicion and fear in the community.

"There is good reason why certain members of the public were less than satisfied with the OPP's unequivocal position about the non-existence of a ring," Glaude wrote.

"I find that the OPP did not conduct a full-scale investigation into the linkages between victims and perpetrators."

Glaude made the point, however, of noting "much of what I have heard about linkages remain allegations that have not been proven beyond a reasonable doubt."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

"There is good reason why certain members of the public were less than satisfied with the OPP's unequivocal position about the non-existence of a ring."
G. Norman Glaude, inquiry commissioner

Metrolinx buys Newmarket line for $68M

TRANSIT Metrolinx, the provincial Crown corporation responsible for the Toronto-area commuter rail system, has bought a rail line from railway giant CN for $68 million.

Metrolinx said yesterday it had acquired the lower portion of the Newmarket rail subdivision in central-north Toronto from Montreal-based CN, Canada's largest rail company.

The transaction gives Metrolinx full ownership of the 96-kilometre-long Barrie-Bradford GO Train corridor between downtown Toronto and Barrie, the provincial transit agency said in a release.

"This transaction marks a milestone for the agency, giving us — for the first time — end-to-end ownership of a GO Transit rail line," said Metrolinx president and chief executive Robert Prichard, a past president and chief executive of Torstar Corp., owner of the Toronto Star newspaper and other publishing and media properties.

"This transaction with CN — an important partner of ours — will permit improvements to service between Toronto and Barrie and points in between. Improved commuter rail and mass transit are vital to easing traffic congestion and air pollution in the (Toronto area) while improving the productivity and economic competitiveness of the region," Prichard said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

"This transaction marks a milestone for the agency, giving us — for the first time — end-to-end ownership of a GO Transit rail line." Metrolinx president Robert Prichard

News in brief

IMPAIRED DRIVING In the fourth week of the holiday Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere (RIDE) program in Durham region, police have seen a noticeable drop in impaired drivers. Police stopped 2,470 vehicles (slightly more than the week before), but administered only half the number of breath tests as the previous week. Fifteen people were charged with drinking and driving offences, compared with 30 in the previous week.

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Woman dead after accident

A car crash in Richmond Hill Monday afternoon left a 60-year-old woman dead. The woman hit a snowbank on Bayview Avenue at Elgin Mills Road. Her jeep flipped and flew across part of Elgin Mills Road, where it was hit by an eastbound tractor trailer. The victim's name won't be released at the request of the family. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Charges to be laid against sports doctor

The lawyer for a prominent Canadian sports medicine doctor says his client will know details of the specific criminal charges against him after a first court date on Friday.

Brian Greenspan says Dr. Anthony Galea was arrested on Oct. 15 and released, although he was told at the time charges would follow.

The lawyer says there will be at least three charges including conspiracy and others under the Food and Drug and Controlled Substances acts.

The charges are allegedly linked to performance enhancing drugs.

Media reports say the FBI is also investigating allegations the Human Growth Hormone and another drug, Actovegin — which is illegal in the U.S. — were found in Galea's medical bag during a New York border crossing.

Greenspan says officials did find the drug, but it was "a very, very small amount, and it was only for him."

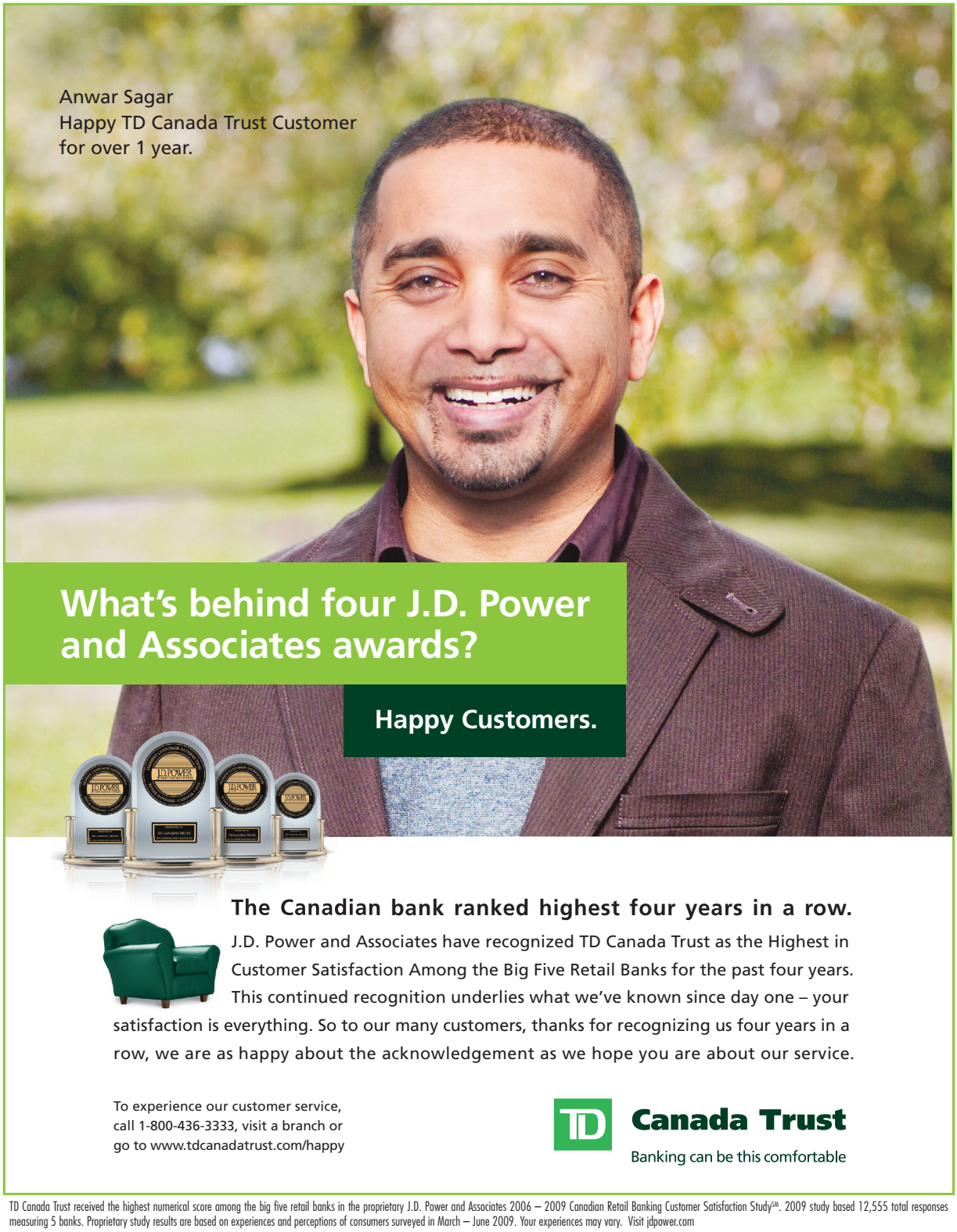
The lawyer said Galea has treated Tiger Woods, but insisted the golf star is not the story in this case.

Greenspan said Galea is a pioneer in sports medicine and is "looking forward for this chapter to be over."

RCMP spokesman said Galea was arrested after a search warrant was executed on the Institute of Sports Medicine Health and Wellness Centre near Toronto on Oct. 15.

Greenspan said today that a hard drive and a medical device of some sort were taken from the clinic.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Trustees go public with 'no' votes

EDUCATION The four Toronto Catholic trustees who voted against re-electing Angela Kennedy as chair are going public.

Despite last week's secret ballot, the group — Rob Davis, Maria Rizzo, John Del Grande and Catherine LeBlanc-Miller — say they want their constituents to know they all supported LeBlanc-Miller.

Kennedy, who was elected chair of the Toronto Catholic District School Board in a 7 to 4 vote, is facing conflict of interest allegations from a May 2008 meeting in which she's accused of taking part in and voting on budget matters that could have impacted her son, who was employed by the board as long-term occasional teacher.

Budget

- The province last year took power away from trustees after they failed to balance the budget.

"It is a generally accepted practice in politics that if facing charges one should step aside until your name is cleared in order to protect the reputation of the organization you lead," the trustees said in a written release yesterday. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

GUILTY A jury in Newmarket, Ont., has found a man guilty in an altercation that left two people seriously injured after some fishermen were pushed into a lake. Trevor Middleton, 23, was found guilty today of four counts of aggravated assault and two counts of criminal negligence causing bodily harm. Court heard that in September 2007, Middleton and some friends pushed a group of Asian fishermen off a dock into Lake Scugog. The prank escalated with one of Middleton's group being severely beaten and a high-speed chase that ended in a crash, leaving one of the fishermen with permanent brain damage. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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15-year-old hospitalized after stabbing
A 15-year-old boy is in hospital after he was stabbed outside of a Kentucky Fried Chicken on Lawrence Avenue East yesterday. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Single molecule may worsen cases of H1N1

Flu **Outbreak**

"We've been doing this for many years and this is the first real clue we've had between severe and mild illness."
Dr. David Kelvin

Why did H1N1 cause some to develop pneumonia and die while leaving most with only mild flu symptoms?

The answer may lie in the elevated presence of a single molecule in those who suffered most from the virus, according to international research led by Toronto scientists.

"We've been doing this for many years and this is the first real clue we've had between severe and mild illness," says Dr. David Kelvin, head of experimental therapeutics at Toronto's University Health Network.

"It's the first thing we can put our finger on and actually say 'This is an area (where) we should intensify our research efforts,'" said Kelvin, the senior study author.

The molecule, known as interleukin 17, may be the culprit in causing severe symptoms in a host of seasonal influenzas and other respiratory ailments like SARS, he said.

The study appears this week in the journal Critical Care.

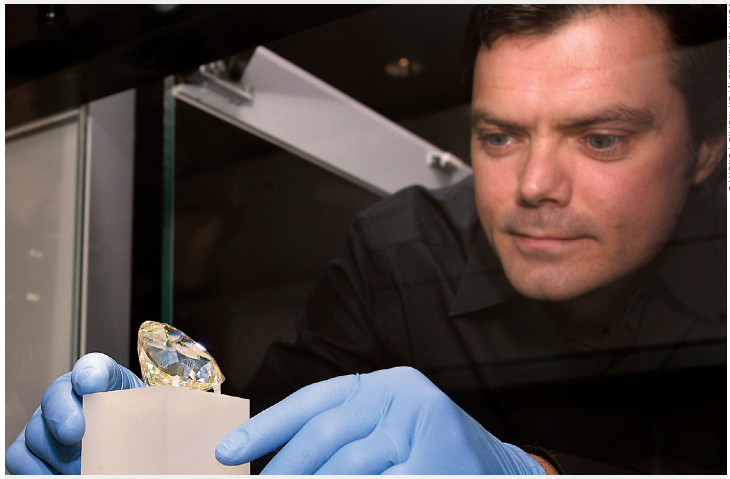
Looking at a group of otherwise healthy Spanish patients during H1N1's initial May appearance, the study found that those with severe symptoms also had elevated levels of interleukin 17, compared to those with mild ailments.

Known as a cytokine, the molecule is one of several that help regulate our body's immune response to viruses and bacteria. But interleukin 17 is also associated with inflammatory autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and asthma, Kelvin said.

It is this inflammatory function that is likely at play in those flu sufferers with elevated levels of the substance, he says.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Museum **Light of the Desert**



JOHN R. KENNEDY/FOR METRO TORONTO

Bill Hodgkinson, a preparator at the Royal Ontario Museum, installs the 898-carat faceted Light of the Desert cerussite gem — the largest of its kind in the world — in the museum's new Gallery of Gems and Gold yesterday. Cerussite's dispersion is more intense than that of diamond and the gem is extremely sensitive to heat and vibration.

Woman killed in collision insisted on driving: Police

CRASH A 29-year-old motorist who died in a crash early yesterday had argued with her boyfriend over whether to take a cab home from a bar, police said.

The pair had been drinking at a pub. He decided to call a taxi, but she wanted to drive. Around 1:20 a.m., as she headed west on Wilson Ave., the woman's silver Volkswagen slammed into the back of a parked TTC bus.

The empty bus had broken down, so the driver parked in the curb lane, turned on the hazard lights and left to get help.

The victim's boyfriend was one of the first people to come across the scene. At first, he thought the woman was not badly injured, as her only injuries appeared to be a few cuts and bruises.

But the woman suffered severe internal injuries. By the time paramedics arrived, she had no vital signs. "The organs can only take so much — it doesn't take much to rupture your arteries," said Const. Hugh Smith. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Blinds pose hazard to kids: Health Canada

SAFETY Health Canada is reminding people to be careful about using Roman shades and roll-up blinds due to the possible strangulation hazard they pose to children.

The agency's warning yesterday follows the recall of more than 50 million shades and blinds in the U.S. by two consumer safety groups. The U.S. bodies are proposing a plan to repair such blinds and shades that would prevent any possible strangulation hazard to young children. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Missing teenager found in coffee shop
Toronto police say a missing teen was found today, after the search for him was upgraded to the highest level. Const. Tony Vella says someone noticed Awais Mahmood, 19, in a coffee shop and called police. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Accused terrorist refused bail

A Canadian citizen accused of helping plot a terrorist attack in Denmark has been refused bail by a judge in Chicago.

Tahawwur Rana, who emigrated to Canada from Pakistan in 1997 and owns an immigration firm in Toronto, will remain behind bars after U.S. Magistrate Judge Nan Nolan ruled that he posed a flight risk.

The 48-year-old suspect has been living in Chicago for a decade.

But Nolan said she wasn't convinced that Rana wasn't a significant flight risk given his strong ties to Canada and his Canadian citizenship.

The decision came a day after U.S. federal prosecutors alleged he knew of last year's terrorist siege on Mumbai, India, days in advance and even sang the praises of its perpetrators.

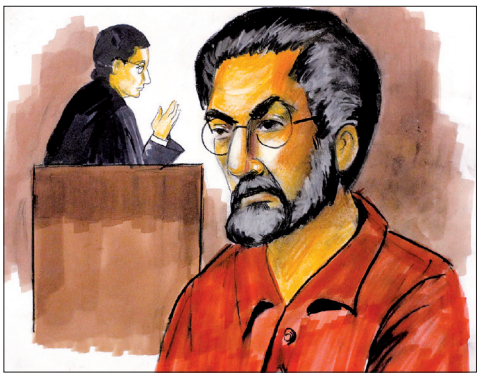
Rana is charged with helping David Coleman Headley, an old friend from their military school days in Pakistan, plot an attack on a Danish newspaper and murder an editor and a cartoonist responsible for publishing cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad. The cartoon's publication in 2005 sparked outrage throughout the Muslim world.

Rana, who also owns a home in Ottawa, hasn't been charged in the Mumbai attacks that killed 166 people in November 2008.

But prosecutors allege in court documents that he had discussed his prior knowledge of the 60-hour siege on the Indian city in a taped conversation with Headley in September.

Headley, who changed his name from Daood Gilani, was charged last week in the Mumbai siege. He's accused of spending two years staking out the city ahead of the attacks.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



VERNA SADOCK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canadian terror suspect Tahawwur Hussain Rana appears in this Dec. 2 courtroom sketch.

Ont., feds earmark funds to retrain older workers

LABOUR The governments of Ontario and Canada are spending almost $60 million to retrain 5,000 older workers who live in communities hit by the recession.

The two governments are spending a combined $58.5 million over three years to provide training and help finding new jobs for people between the ages of 55 and 64.

The money is specifically targeted at hard-hit single-industry towns or areas that are dealing with high unemployment rates.

The federal funding was announced in last January's budget, but Ottawa has not spent any of the money in Ontario before now due to the lack of an agreement.

5,000

The $58.5-million retraining project will help 5,000 people between the ages of 55 and 64 find news jobs.

Ottawa's Human Resources Minister Diane Finley and Ontario's Minister of Training John Milloy are announcing the deal in Oshawa, where the recession has gutted the auto industry.

Labour groups say the funding is an important way to help bridge unemployed older workers to retirement, when they can collect pension and other government benefits.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Local grower to go public

STOCKS Greenhouse grower Village Farms Income Fund has obtained approval from the Ontario Superior Court of Justice for its conversion from an income fund into a publicly traded corporation.

As a result of the conversion, common shares of Village Farms International Inc. will begin trading on the Toronto Stock Exchange under the symbol VFF on or around Jan. 5, the company said yesterday.

Village Farms is one of the largest producers, marketers and distributors of greenhouse grown tomatoes, bell peppers and cucumbers in North America.

Product grown in greenhouse facilities located in British Columbia and Texas is marketed and distributed under the Village Farms brand, primarily to retail grocers and dedicated fresh food distributors throughout the United States, Canada and Japan.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TODAY ONLY
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16
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ALL OTHER STORES OPEN UNTIL 11PM

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After sale $50

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30% off
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dress shirts & ties
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Savings are off our regular prices, unless otherwise specified. See in-store for details.

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With a charming pendant and gorgeous gift box, you're sure to add sparkle to any stocking.

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Holiday boxed fashion jewellery
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Reg. $6 - $38 **Sale $4.50 - $28.50**

Selection varies by store, while quantities last.

December 16th until December 17th

the Bay

Police seek driver in Pickering hit and run

A driver is sought after a 17-year-old girl was hit by a silver van at a crosswalk on Kingston Road near Valleyfarm Road in Pickering Monday night. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Building a better city

Leaders gather to propose civic initiatives

With their thoughts on their mentor David Pecaut, who died a day earlier, the city's next generation of leaders met yesterday to focus on specific projects that could change life in the city, from increased voter turnout in municipal elections to creating an arts corridor along John Street.

As more than 150 participants of the Emerging Leaders Network, an offshoot of the Toronto City Summit Alliance, gathered at the MaRS Centre for a long-scheduled session, many talked about how Pecaut's dream of collective leadership in the city could be the best possible tribute to the civic leader who touched so many with his projects and initiatives.

Here is a look at a few of the proposed initiatives:

Arts corridor: Imagine taking an iPhone or BlackBerry, pointing it to a wall as you're walking by and getting an instant piece of digital art.

That's exactly what might happen if artists get their wish to create an arts and cultural corridor along John Street in the entertainment district.

With the planned digital-arts project expected to launch next spring, passersby would also be able to get free wireless access on the street or at a sidewalk cafe.

Voting process: Too often in municipal elections, the same incumbents are re-elected over and over, and despite the city's diversity, only 11 per cent of city councillors are visible minorities and only 22 per cent are women.

Dave Meslin of the Better Ballots campaign also noted some fields are so crowded that a councillor can win with as little as 20 per cent of the vote.

Proposed changes range from setting term limits to voting on weekends and holidays or ranked choice ballots where voters would choose their top preferences, and rounds of voting would take place until a councillor can win a majority of votes in a ward.

Other ideas include extending voting rights to non-citizens or including younger voters by lowering the voting age.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The priciest homes of 2009

REAL ESTATE House prices soared in the second half of 2009 in most of the GTA. Here are five where the buyers may not have even noticed — the most expensive homes sold this year:

1 32 High Point Rd. Asked: $13.888 million. Sold: $11.8 million.

An 18,000-square-foot Bridle Path mansion on more than two acres. Negative-edge waterfall pool and tennis court.

2 91 Old Colony Rd. Asked: $10.9 million. Sold: $8.675 million.

Imposing stone mansion in Bayview Avenue/York Mills Road area. Two-storey library with mahogany cabinetry. Indoor pool with hot tub and lower-level ballroom. Featured in Architectural Digest.

3 12 The Bridle Path. Asked: $6.995 million. Sold: $6.9 million.

DICK LOEK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The most expensive home sold this year in the GTA — at a cost of $11.8 million — is located at 32 High Point Rd.

New 11,500-square-foot European-style chateau. Grand two-storey entrance, including two-storey "oasis" pool area.

4 338 Douglas Dr. Asked: $7.5 million. Sold: $6.8 million.

Classic Rosedale estate surrounded by ravine and gardens.

5 22 The Bridle Path. Asked: $6.250 million. Sold: $5.320 million.

Gated French chateau on ravine-like setting. Tennis court and par-3 golf course with putting green. Indoor lap pool.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Speculation abounds over Wind Mobile rates

WIRELESS Wind Mobile will announce its handsets and rates today and if online speculation is anything to go by, consumers will be pleased, though perhaps not surprised.

The company has refused to comment on rumours and leaks on blogs and online forums — some of which were supposedly posted by insiders, others leaked by disgruntled ex-employees. But top industry analysts, who did not want to be named, said some of the information looked "dead-on," while adding some aspects were likely to change.

Wind seems to be coming in with a more fulsome low-rate plan, with unlimited national calling between the company's future subscribers and 100 provincewide voice minutes for $15 — twice the minutes of Telus Corp.'s discount Koodoo brand and Rogers Wireless Inc.'s FIDO, which have similar $15 plans.

100 The number of province-wide voice minutes that will be offered by Wind Mobile's $15 plan, according to an online posting.

The posting, which has almost 50,000 page views, also lists a $35-per-month plan with unlimited provincial calling (but only 50 outgoing texts) and a $45 monthly plan that includes unlimited national calling and texting.

The plans, posted on howardforums.com, a site for cellphone junkies, are heavy on "unlimited" talk, text and data plans, but are not necessarily cheaper than competitors. In interviews, Globalive chairman Anthony Lacavera has stressed his goal is to provide value-for-money, good customer service and clear billing.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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PHOTO BY Kate Turning

JULY 6 – AUGUST 8, 2010

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The SOUND of MUSIC

PHOTO OF ELICIA MacKENZIE BY CYLLA VON TIEDEMANN

HOLIDAY PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

DAY	MATINEE	EVENING	DAY	MATINEE	EVENING
Wednesday Dec 16	1:30 PM	7:30 PM	Saturday Dec 26		7:30 PM
Thursday Dec 17		7:30 PM	Sunday Dec 27	1:30 PM	7:30 PM
Friday Dec 18		7:30 PM	Tuesday Dec 29		7:00 PM
Saturday Dec 19	1:30 PM	7:30 PM	Wednesday Dec 30	1:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sunday Dec 20	1:30 PM		Thursday Dec 31	1:30 PM	
Tuesday Dec 22	1:30 PM	7:00 PM	Saturday Jan 2	1:30 PM	7:30 PM
Wednesday Dec 23	1:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sunday Jan 3 FINAL SHOW	1:30 PM	7:30 PM
Thursday Dec 24	1:30 PM				

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Pecaut family announces plans to honour deceased civic leader

The family of the late David Pecaut yesterday revealed plans for honouring the civic leader, who died of cancer on Monday. A visitation to pay respects to Pecaut will take place from 5 to 8 p.m. on Sunday at Mount Pleasant Visitation Centre. A public celebration of Pecaut's life will be held at a later date. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Holiday dreams take flight

Plane takes off from Pearson to give kids glimpse of Santa

You could hear the squeals of joy all the way to the North Pole as Skyservice Flight 900 took off from Pearson International Airport on a special mission — to catch a glimpse of Santa Claus before the big night.

"Santa, Santa, Santa," cheered 85 children and their families as the Boeing 757 made its way above the clouds to the fabled home and workshop of the jolly old elf, via northern New York, yesterday. It only took an hour thanks to the sonic rocket boosters on the aircraft.

And just as passengers big and small were getting into the groove, the captain announced the sighting of a strange craft pulled by what appeared to be reindeer. Then there was a thud and the sound of footsteps on the roof of the fuselage.

"It was the real Santa. I know because I've seen him before and he only wears his magic glasses when he steers on the sled."
Stephanie Clayton, Santa flight guest

As if by magic, the white-bearded, barrel-bellied Claus himself appeared in the aircraft, ho ho ho-ing down the aisle as children shouted with glee.

"It was the real Santa," said an ecstatic Stephanie Clayton, 7. "I know because I've seen him before and he only wears his magic glasses when he steers on the sled."

Stephanie, her sisters Sydney, 10, and Danielle, 6, along with mom Denise were among the special guests on the annual Santa flight to the North Pole organized by the Starlight Children's Foundation of Canada. Each year, it makes dreams come true for thousands of kids who are chronically, critically and seriously ill. Some may not see next Christmas.

"The adventure helps children forget their illness," said Leisa Washington, Starlight's great escapes co-ordinator.

"The flight gives parents a chance to have fun with all their children."

The fantasy flight was sponsored by Thomas Cook Travel Canada and Skyservice.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Jarvis Collegiate **Rap contest**

JOHN R. KENNEDY/FOR METRO TORONTO

Jamila Mohamed, 14, tries her hand at rap at Jarvis Collegiate Institute yesterday as part of a competition by Colleges Ontario to encourage students to plan for their post-secondary education. Six professional rappers entertained the students before letting them take turns on the mic.

Man pleads guilty to possessing stolen bikes

CRIME The suspected leader of a Toronto bicycle-theft ring has pleaded guilty to possessing 10 stolen bicycles and to six drug-possession charges.

Igor Kenk was sentenced yesterday to 30 months in jail. However, due to time he served awaiting trial, he will serve four more months.

Kenk, 50, who operated a used-bike shop, was arrested in July 2008.

In a series of subsequent raids of his rental garages, thousands of allegedly stolen bikes were seized. There were also a number of drug-related seizures involving cocaine and marijuana.

A judge ruled that the public benefited from Kenk's plea bargain, as his business is no longer in operation and bike registration has increased significantly. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Worker killed by concrete slab

QEW A construction worker was killed yesterday afternoon when a concrete slab fell on top of him at a job site on the Queen Elizabeth Way at Bronte Road in Oakville.

The Ministry of Labour is investigating the cause of the accident.

The man was cutting a concrete slab on a bridge when both the concrete and cutting machine fell on top of him. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

The victim's name has not been released as police try to notify next of kin.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

GO SHOPPING GO VISITING GO PARTYING GO HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

YOUR HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

December 24
Earlier homebound service on some trains and buses.

December 25
Holiday service

December 26
Saturday service

December 27
Sunday service

December 28
Saturday service

December 29-December 30
Regular service

December 31
Earlier homebound service on some trains and buses. Later departures on some Lakeshore trains and connecting buses.
All service is FREE after 7:00 p.m.

January 1
Holiday service

January 2
Regular service

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Nova Scotia court upholds $2,500 insurance cap
The Nova Scotia Appeal Court has upheld provincial legislation that imposes a $2,500 cap on insurance awards for those who suffer minor injuries in auto accidents. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada

Warming costs the Inuit

A study suggests Arctic climate warming is costing the Inuit more money. New expenses, such as the need for safety gear and other equipment, are falling on Inuit families least able to shoulder them and governments should step in to help, the study says. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Will tarsands get a break from Tories?

The Harper government says special breaks may be in store for Alberta's tarsands.

Go Green

Tarsands emissions may not drop as much as other industries as Canada moves to synchronize its environmental policies with its largest trading partner, the United States.

Environment Minister Jim Prentice says legislation moving through the U.S. Congress would grant special breaks to certain "trade-exposed" industries.

The U.S. bill — called the Waxman-Markey bill — would, among other things, set a national cap on greenhouse gases and allow polluters to buy and sell allowances.

This is known as a cap-and-trade system.

Prentice told reporters in Copenhagen it's important that whatever industries fall into that "trade-sensitive" category in the States also do so in Canada.

He didn't rule out the tarsands as an industry that could qualify for special breaks.

"A key feature of the Waxman-Markey legislation is the treatment accorded to what are referred to in the United States as trade-exposed industries," Prentice said.

"And this is something that we will need to consider on the Canadian side of the border."

Asked if that includes the tarsands, Prentice replied: "I think any industry that is a trade-exposed industry in the same sense would be an industry that has to be considered in terms of its comparability to the U.S. framework."

The government has been studying which sectors might get breaks, he added, but no decision has been made.

Prentice was responding to documents obtained by the CBC that apparently suggest Canada's oil-and-gas industries wouldn't need to cut their carbon emissions as deeply as first thought.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

MORE COVERAGE, PAGE 22

U.S. bill

- The Waxman-Markey bill is named after its authors, Democrats Henry Waxman and Edward Markey.
- The bill would help some energy-intensive, trade-vulnerable industries adapt to new clean-energy rules and technologies by giving them special allowances to cover their higher costs.

Quebec Camping for a cause

JACQUES BOISSINOT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Maxime Leblanc and Melanie Dubreuil of Quebec City sit in front of their tent yesterday while demonstrating outside the riding office of Josée Verner, minister of Canadian heritage, status of women, official languages and minister for la francophonie in Quebec City. Leblanc and Dubreuil of the Canadian Youth Delegation say they will camp outside the office until tomorrow to protest against the Canadian government's position at the Copenhagen climate summit.

Yes Men keep Canada on its toes

PRANK Get ready for more shenanigans, Canada.

Or maybe that's all part of the hoax.

It's difficult to know what's real and what's not when it comes to the madcap world of the Yes Men.

The group of pranksters played a prank Monday on Canada over its stance on climate change.

Now those same tricksters are suggesting they will keep up their antics, and Alberta's tarsands could be their next target.

The New York-based group told a Twitter audience yesterday it pulled its prank to teach people "about Canada's true nature."

Go Green

One Twitter user asked, "Why stop now?" and wanted to know if the Yes Men will keep up their campaign against the tarsands.

"Who says we're stopping?" was the group's cryptic reply.

The prank began with a news release bearing an Environment Canada letterhead claiming Canada was revising its carbon emissions targets.

An hour later, a second release came out, criticizing the first as a fake.

It called the first communique "the height of cruelty, hypocrisy and immorality." But it, too, was a phoney.

The group issued a third phoney news release, this time with a link to video of faux Ugandan reaction to the fake Canadian policy change. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Great Lakes water report watered down

DREDGING A new report is disputing the findings of a Canadian group that said the Great Lakes basin is losing large volumes of water because of navigational dredging.

The report by a U.S.-Canada panel of experts says the difference in water levels between Lake Michigan and Lake Erie has declined on average by about 23 centimetres between 1963 and 2006.

The report says climate is the main driver of the drop of water levels.

The group Georgian Bay Forever contends dredging of the St. Clair River during the 1960s has increased water flow from Lake Huron to Lake Erie, causing levels on Huron and Michigan to drop.

But the International Upper Great Lakes Study Board says there's no need for remedial measures in the St. Clair River.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

SHIPWRECK A Civil War-era schooner that sank in a snowstorm in 1862 has been located in Lake Ontario. Two shipwreck explorers chanced upon the 36-metre-long C. Reeve while conducting underwater surveys this summer near Rochester, N.Y.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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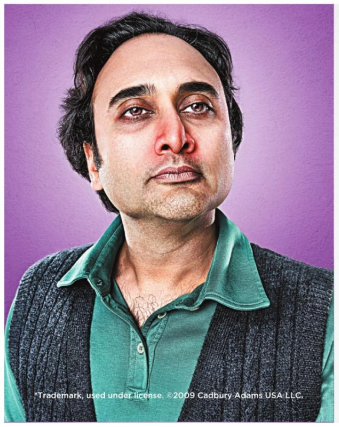

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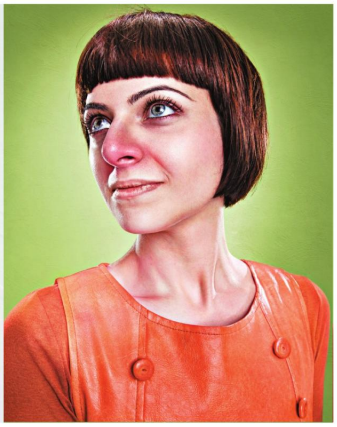

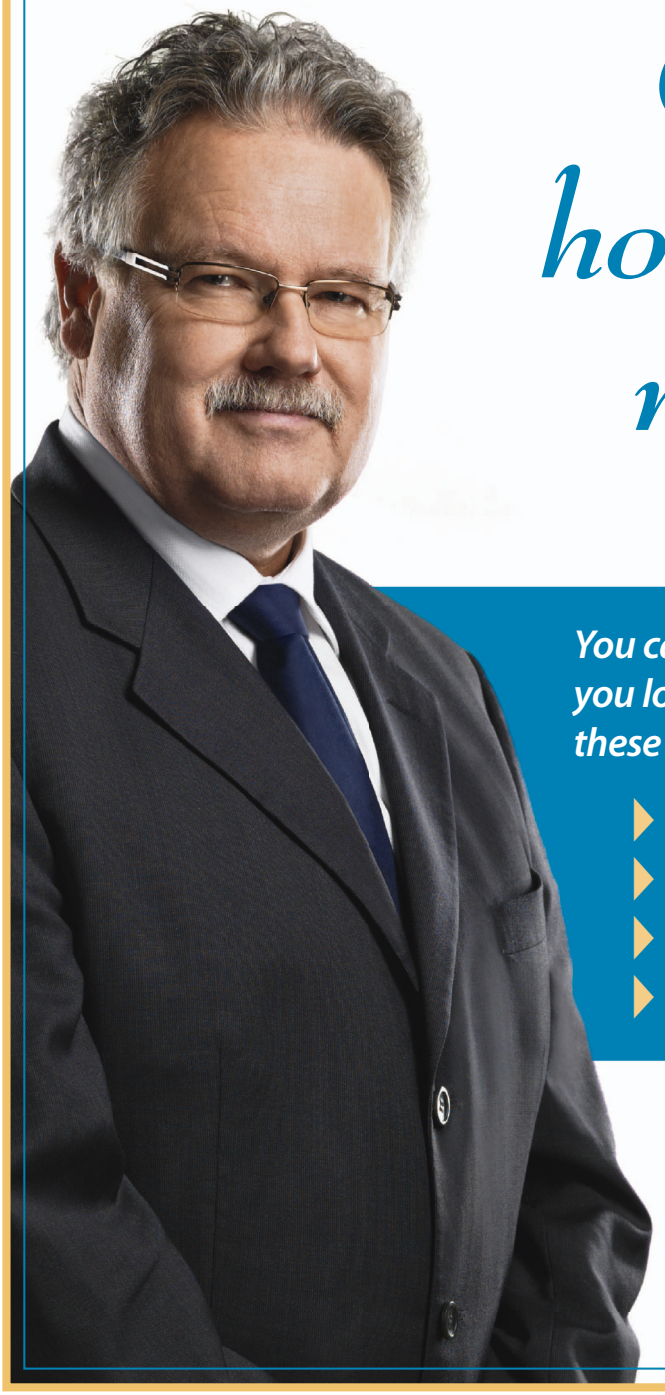

Catch the holiday spirit, not the flu

You can protect yourself and the ones you love from the H1N1 flu virus, by taking these simple steps:

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Dr. David Butler-Jones
Chief Public Health Officer of Canada

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Canada

Police to battle domestic violence after murder-suicide

The deaths of five family members in a murder suicide have prompted Victoria police to form a domestic violence unit. Insp. Clark Russell told a coroner's inquest into the September 2007 deaths, the two-officer unit will work with counsellors and legal officials. THE CANADIAN PRESS

If it ain't broke ...

Pensions expert says don't rush into changes

Take a deep breath.

That's the advice an expert on retirement income is sending to Canada.

Our retirement-income system may not be the disaster some politicians and interest groups make it out to be, says Jack Mintz.

Mintz is the author of a new report that will play a central role in pension-reform negotiations this week.

Mintz has been hired by the federal government to assess the state of retirement income.

His influential report is to be presented to finance ministers in Whitehorse on Friday to lay the groundwork for their negotiations on how to force Canadians to save more for their retirements.

Mintz cautioned against undertaking major reforms to fix pension problems that might not be there.

His main message, he said, is "we should start with an open mind on some of these issues."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

By the numbers

Some numbers on pensions, compiled by the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board:

- 5.9 million – The number of Canadian workers who participate in an employer pension plan.
- 63 per cent – The proportion of working Canadians with no pension coverage.
- 30 per cent – Canadian families with no retirement savings.

Shady Nook **How to be a moose's main man**

JEFF STOCKE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mike Markwart feeds strawberries to a cow moose from the steps of his deck in Shady Nook, Alta. For the past three weeks, the cow with an injured front leg and her offspring have been living next to the house where Markwart and his wife, Chris, feed the animals.

HST hits consumers, Manitoba warns

TAXES A Manitoba government report says harmonizing provincial and federal sales taxes would cost consumers more than $400 million.

They would pay hundreds more for everything from gasoline to home heating to haircuts, says the report, which seeks to justify why Manitoba continues to resist the call of a harmonized tax.

"Manitoba does not support harmonization at this time because of the potential risk to the economic recovery and the burden it would place on Manitoba families at a time of economic uncertainty," it says.

Manitoba is one of the last provincial holdouts — along with Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island — when it comes to harmonizing sales taxes.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

"Manitoba does not support harmonization."
Government report

AIDS activist stole $80,000

CRIME A former program director with AIDS P.E.I. has been sentenced to a year of house arrest for stealing and defrauding the organization of more than $80,000.

Angela Michelle MacKinnon, 34, will not be able to leave her home for any reason without written permission for the duration of the sentence.

She was also ordered today to perform 240 hours of community service and pay $80,913 in restitution.

She was also placed on probation for two years.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Photo by Paula Wilson of Original Toronto Cast.

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21 no show	22 8 pm	23 3 pm & 8 pm	24 2 pm	25 no show	26 3 pm & 8 pm	27 no show
				JANUARY 2010		
28 no show	29 8 pm	30 8 pm	31 3 pm & 8 pm	1 no show	2 FINAL SHOWS 3 pm & 8 pm	

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(416) 247-7091

Cloverdale Mall
250 The East Mall
(416) 231-5973

Woodbine Centre
500 Rexdale Blvd.
(416) 798-0229

Georgetown
5 Mountainview Rd.
(905) 877-3695

Hamilton
Fenworth Place Plaza
550 Fennell Ave. East
(905) 388-4849

640 Mohawk Rd. West
(905) 388-5556

South Hamilton Square
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(905) 318-1600

Center Mall
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Train derailment north of Edmonton prompts investigation

Canadian National Railway is investigating what caused 15 cars to derail at a rail yard near a petroleum refinery north of Edmonton. Thirteen empty cars left the tracks at the CN Rail yard near Shell Canada's Scotford refinery and tipped on to their sides. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada not losing prisoners: Cannon

Minister admits delays in getting information

Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon is denying a report that Canada lost track of war prisoners transferred to Afghan authorities, but he admits there have been delays in getting required information.

Lawrence Cannon

"Canada can account for all transferred detainees currently in the Afghan prison system," he said yesterday.

"On rare occasions, notification of transfer or release is not received in a timely fashion from Afghan authorities as required under the 2007 arrangement."

He was responding to a published report that concluded an unknown number of Taliban insurgents captured by Canadian Forces were unaccounted for after being handed over to the Afghans.

Cannon said Canadian officials in Afghanistan do their best to "reinforce strict adherence" to the May 2007 agreement that allows for follow-up visits, including unannounced spot checks to Afghan prisons.

The government has faced heavy criticism in recent weeks over its handling of detainees captured during the war in Afghanistan.

Conservative cabinet ministers repeatedly denied that enemy fighters captured by Canadian Forces were later abused by their Afghan jailers prior to 2007.

But those denials have been cast in doubt by the chief of the defence staff, Gen. Walt Natynczyk, who confirmed last week that there was at least one such case of abuse in 2006.

Critics want to know why the government continued to turn over prisoners in 2006-07 despite evidence of abuse.

Cannon initially told reporters that Canada had conducted 800 visits to Afghan prisons in recent years. But a Foreign Affairs official later said that Cannon gave the incorrect figure and that only 190 visits had been conducted by Canadians, both in Kandahar and Kabul.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

MORE COVERAGE, PAGE 23

Tories skip hearing

- Conservative MPs were a no-show at yesterday's meeting of a parliamentary committee investigating what Canada knew about Afghan prison torture. The move left opposition members sputtering — and plans to hold further public hearings in disarray.

Ottawa Generals at attention

ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada's Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Walt Natynczyk, right, and Gen. Stanley McChrystal, Commander ISAF and Commander United States Forces Afghanistan, take part in a ceremony yesterday at the National War Memorial in Ottawa.

News in brief

ADS The federal Competition Bureau said yesterday that cable provider Cogeco has removed misleading advertising claims about the speed of its Internet services in two Quebec cities. In a similar claim, a court in B.C. earlier ruled that Rogers could not continue to claim it had "Canada's Most Reliable" wireless network without qualification. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NB Power sale prompts tariff worries

ENERGY A Canadian energy analyst who supports the proposed sale of NB Power to Hydro-Quebec says there needs to be a guarantee that transmission tariffs in New Brunswick won't skyrocket to those in Quebec, where they are almost three times more.

Energy companies seeking to ship power through New Brunswick's power grid currently pay a transmission tariff of $25 per kilowatt per year. In Quebec, that rate is $72.

Officials with Hydro-Quebec and the New Brunswick government say there are no plans to increase New Brunswick's transmission tariff.

But Tom Adams, an independent energy adviser, says there's nothing to stop Hydro-Quebec from applying to New Brunswick's energy and utilities board to merge the two provincial transmission tariffs once the sale is finalized.

But New Brunswick Energy Minister Jack Keir said any tariff merger would not happen.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Departs Jan 13/ggv/ws. ADD Montreal attractions pass for $22.

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Arenas Doradas + taxes & fees $204
Departs Jan 9/nol/ts.

Cancun 7 Nights 4-Star $497
Oasis Palm Beach + taxes & fees $272
Departs Jan 15/nol/5g.

Manzanillo 7 Nights 4-Star $498
Tesoro Manzanillo + taxes & fees $272
Departs Jan 18/vat/ts.

Costa Rica 7 Nights 4-Star $597
Allegro Papagayo + taxes & fees $210
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AIR CONDITIONING	Standard	Optional	Optional
16" ALUMINUM WHEELS	Standard	15" Steel	15" Steel
REMOTE KEYLESS ENTRY	Standard	Not Available	Not Available
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DOWN	BI-WEEKLY
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$3,000	$80

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CITY: 8.7L/100 km (32 mpg)Δ

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DOWN	BI-WEEKLY
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$3,000	$68

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DOWN	BI-WEEKLY
$0	$112
$1,000	$105
$3,000	$93

HWY: 6.2L/100 km (46 mpg)
CITY: 7.8L/100 km (36 mpg)Δ

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Air ambulance delays prompts call for plane in Labrador

Health officials in Newfoundland and Labrador are reviewing air ambulance services after repeated delays prompted demands for a plane based in Labrador. Liberal Leader Yvonne Jones presented a petition in the house of assembly yesterday signed by 3,000 people. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Games too corporate: Group

Council of Canadians goes after Olympic sponsor Coke

VANCOUVER 2010 Games

The head of a prominent Canadian advocacy group says the Olympics have lost their way, allowing the event to be overshadowed by corporations that pay big money to sponsor the Games.

The Council of Canadians launched a campaign in Vancouver yesterday, distributing signs that attack the environmental record of Olympic sponsor Coca-Cola, arguing that its attempts to lessen its footprint amount to little more than "greenwashing."

But council chair Maude Barlow says her group's concerns stretch further than just a single sponsor, and instead she objects to what she sees as the corporate marketing machine that now controls the Games.

"It's maintaining the Olympics as a marketing tool, as a logo, as a symbol, as opposed to the athletes themselves," Barlow said yesterday in an interview from Copenhagen, where she is following the UN climate change talks.

"I think the corporate stranglehold has really grown, and it's really time for us to name it. I would rather the Olympics are what we wish they were."

Coca-Cola insists it has spent millions to lessen its environmental impact, including adopting bottles that use less plastic, using more environmentally-friendly refrigeration technology and buying hydrogen trucks to deliver its products.

While the council's sign campaign is targeting Coke specifically, the group says it may also expand to include other sponsors, such as RBC and Petro-Canada, for their involvement in Alberta's controversial oilsands.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Council of Canadians national board member Bob Ages, second from left, is interviewed yesterday after the launch of an Olympic sign campaign outside city hall in Vancouver. The Council of Canadians is adding its voice to groups opposed to the Vancouver Olympics, taking aim at sponsor Coca-Cola. The advocacy group is distributing signs that attack Coke's environmental record.

On the web

- Follow the Olympic torch's journey with an interactive map at **metronews.ca/sports.**

Economy on the rebound: Economists

FINANCES Bankruptcies tumbled and Canadians were buying more homes and cars this fall as indications mounted that the economy has finally shifted into a higher, forward gear.

Fresh economic data released yesterday for the October-December quarter still in progress was almost universally positive, and strongly so, say economists.

The most dramatic news had to do with Canadians' finances. The Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy reported consumer bankruptcies fell a record 28.4 per cent in October, although some of the falloff could be attributed to changes in filing costs that persuaded Canadians to declare the previous month.

Also on the positive side was a 3.5 per cent increase in new vehicle sales in October compared with September, and a whopping 73 per cent jump in the sale of existing homes via the Multiple Listing Service in November, putting activity near the pre-recession levels of November 2007.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

79,000 Taken in conjunction with the previously reported 79,000 jobs gain for November, analysts say Canada's economy appears to be making up for the disappointing performance of the third quarter.

News in brief

RCMP The head of a civil liberties group is accusing the police of using privacy legislation to block public scrutiny of their actions, a day after the RCMP in Cape Breton refused to reveal details of a fatal shooting involving one of its officers.

HELLS ANGELS Seven suspected members of the Hells Angels were arrested in a series of raids yesterday in Hamilton, Waterloo and Nanticoke. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Lynden Park Mall
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Markville Shopping Centre
Masonville Place
Northgate Shopping Centre
Oakville Place
Oshawa Centre
Pen Centre
Pickering Town Centre
Scarborough Town Centre
Sherway Gardens
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Upper Canada Mall
Vaughan Mills
Westmount Shopping Centre
White Oaks Mall
Woodbine Centre
Yorkdale Mall

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Blessings of the Season

This has been a very challenging year for many people. A weakened economy and its effect on people around the world and in communities across Canada has been substantial.

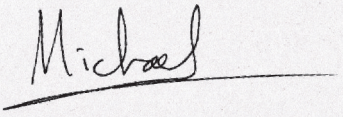
If there was ever a time and a season to give, it is now.

So on behalf of our 24,000 dedicated Maple Leaf employees and loyal customers, we are donating over 100,000 meals to food banks and shelters this holiday season – as part of an ongoing commitment.

We are proud to be Canadian and part of being Canadian is caring for those less fortunate than us.

We would like to take this time to thank our millions of customers for your support throughout this year. We deeply appreciate the faith you put in us, and we remain committed to bringing you the very best in food.

From our family at Maple Leaf to yours - we wish you the warmest blessings of the season.



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Vancouver **Friends in high places**

DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

A window washer hangs out next to a statue by Chinese artist Yue Minjun yesterday in Vancouver.

Dofasco avoids global job cuts

Parent firm plans layoffs

The world's biggest steelmaker plans to reduce its global workforce next year, but the Canadian operations of ArcelorMittal shouldn't be affected other than through natural attrition, a spokesman says.

Reports say the company, which operates Dofasco in Hamilton, is looking to reduce its overall head count in 2010 by about 3.5 per cent, with most of the cuts likely to occur in Europe and the U.S.

Spokesman Andrew Sloan said ArcelorMittal Dofasco's 5,000 workers in Hamilton shouldn't be affected other than through retirements.

"ArcelorMittal Dofasco has as one of its advantages a workforce that averages almost 30 years of service, so almost 2,500 retirement-eligible employees," Sloan said in an email.

ArcelorMittal, based in Luxembourg, bought Canadian-owned Dofasco in 2006 during a massive consolidation in the global steel industry. It also owns the former Sidbec and Quebec Cartier Mining.

287,000
Arcelor workers worldwide

10,000
Jobs to be cut, primarily in the U.S. and Europe

A report in the Wall Street Journal says the job cuts are expected to affect workers who were temporarily laid off as plants idled earlier this year.

The report says the company doesn't expect steel prices to recover to their 2007 highs for a decade, but it still plans to increase production to a capacity utilization rate of 70 per cent at the end of the year, up from 61 per cent in the third quarter.

Most steelmakers took a major hit in 2009 and were forced to cut their production dramatically. Since then, steel prices have rebounded somewhat as stimulus spending, particularly in developing economies like China and India, has ratcheted up demand.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

N.B. woos nurses to hard-to-fill jobs by offering $10,000 loans

INCENTIVE The New Brunswick government will spend $800,000 on new incentives designed to lure employees to hard-to-fill nursing positions. Health Minister Mary Schryer announced yesterday that 40 graduate nurses will be offered $10,000 forgivable loans this year, with another 40 loans next year.

"Targeted positions will be based on recruitment and retention needs of both regional health authorities, including hard-to-recruit positions in rural areas and hard-to-fill vacancies in urban areas," she said. Each nurse must remain on the job at least two years.

Marilyn Quinn, president of the New Brunswick Nurses Union, welcomed the initiative, noting the province currently has a shortage of about 400 nurses, and almost half of the 6,200 registered nurses in the public sector are eligible to retire.

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Oral Roberts dies at 91

A spokesman for Oral Roberts says the evangelist who rose from tent revivals to found a multimillion-dollar organization and an Oklahoma university bearing his name has died. He was 91. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Leaders risking setbacks: Schwarzenegger

California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger says world policy-makers do not have to choose between a clean environment and economic growth. Schwarzenegger said, "We've proved that over and over again in California." Interviewed by ABC television from the Copenhagen climate conference, the Austrian-born former film star said he thinks world leaders may be risking setbacks by pushing so aggressively for an accommodation on curbs to heat-trapping emissions. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S., China square off

Tensions rise in Copenhagen over emissions debate

In a showdown between the world's two largest polluters, China accused the United States and other rich nations of backsliding on their commitments to fight global warming, and the top American envoy declared the U.S. would not change its offer on emissions cuts.

Trying to ease the tensions, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said rich and poor countries must "stop pointing fingers" and should increase their pledges to cut greenhouse gas emissions to salvage the faltering talks on a climate pact

Go Green

For its part, the 27-nation European Union said both the U.S. and China need to offer more at the UN climate talks in Copenhagen.

Ban's warning in an interview with The Associated Press came as world leaders began arriving in the Danish capital, kicking the two-week conference into high gear in its quest to deliver a deal to curb emissions of the heat-trapping greenhouse gases that cause global warming. Key issues remain, and the conference so far has been marked by sharp disagreements between China and the United States and deep divisions between rich and poor nations. China and other developing countries are resisting U.S.-led attempts to make their cuts in emissions growth binding, instead of voluntary, and open to international scrutiny. China, the world's largest polluter, is grouped with developing nations at the talks, but the U.S. doesn't consider China to be in need of climate-change aid.

"You can't even begin to have an environmentally sound agreement without the adequate, significant participation of China," said U.S. climate envoy Todd Stern. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

m.metronews.ca

Scan this barcode for a daily video report from Copenhagen, or watch it at metronews.ca/world

London Activists target Canada

KRISTY WIGGLESWORTH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The environmental group Camp for Climate Action protests Alberta's tarsands yesterday in London's Trafalgar Square. British police arrested three of the activists who scaled the wall of the nearby Canadian High Commission and cut down a Canadian flag. The men, all in their 20s, initially chained themselves to a balcony but came down peacefully after just more than an hour.

Cutting out cow dung a win for environment: U.S.

COPENHAGEN The U.S. is counting on cows to save the planet. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced an agreement with the American dairy industry yesterday to reduce the industry's greenhouse gas emissions 25 per cent by 2020, mostly by convincing farmers to capture the methane from cow manure that otherwise would be released into the atmosphere.

Go Green

"The use of manure of technology is a win for everyone," Vilsack said at the UN climate talks. Agriculture accounts for about seven per cent of the greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

POLL More Americans believe steps to reduce global warming will help the U.S. economy than say such measures will hurt it. In an Associated Press-Stanford University poll, 40 per cent said action to slow global warming in the future would create jobs. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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U.S. school Taliban assignment called off

A school principal in Virginia has called off an assignment asking students to represent the views of the Taliban in a mock United Nations debate. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KOJI SASAHARA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chinese Vice-President Xi Jinping delivers a speech yesterday during a welcome reception hosted by Japan-China friendship groups in Tokyo.

Meeting sparks royal controversy in Japan

Japan's prime minister is under fire over allegations that he injected politics into the imperial palace by using his clout to arrange a last-minute audience between Emperor Akihito and China's vice-president.

The furor over the 20-minute meet-and-greet yesterday touches on an emotion-laden post-Second World War taboo barring the emperor — who since 1945 has been a ceremonial head of state — from wielding political power or being used by politicians for their own partisan goals.

The critics are fuming over allegations that Japan's new government bent normal rules requiring a month's notice for imperial audiences and pressured the palace into hastily arranging the meeting between Akihito and China's Vice-President Xi Jinping, a rising star in China's leadership, to curry favour with Beijing.

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, who took office in September, has stressed that he intends to improve Tokyo's ties with China.

Since the end of the Second World War, Japan's emperor has had a tightly restricted role and is generally kept away from exerting political influence. A symbolic figurehead, he rarely speaks in public, does not set his own schedule and his infrequent foreign trips must be approved by the cabinet.

The changes in Akihito's imperial role — imposed by the U.S.-led Allies after Japan's surrender ended the war — have good reason.

Before and during the Second World War, Japan's emperors were often used as political pawns to rally the nation behind its colonial expansion across Asia.

The late Emperor Hirohito, Akihito's father, was revered as a living god and Japan's troops died fighting in his name.

It is not unusual for Akihito to grant audiences to foreign dignitaries.

The meetings, such as one recently held with U.S. President Barack Obama, are carefully orchestrated and planned well in advance to avoid hints of favouritism or the appearance of political undertones.

The uproar in some quarters in the United States over Obama's low bow underscore that the scrutiny otherwise innocuous imperial audiences can invite.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pleased by trip

- China's Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, Jiang Yu, said Beijing was pleased by the trip. "The Japanese side made very considerate arrangements for the visit," she said. "We attach great importance to that."

Car bombing likely targeted ex-Afghan VP

KABUL A suicide car bomber struck yesterday near the home of a former Afghan vice-president and a hotel favoured by Westerners, killing at least eight people and wounding dozens in one of the safest neighbourhoods in the city.

Afghan police officials said the target of the bombing had not been confirmed. But security officials at the scene suspect the bomber was going after the home of former vice-president Ahmad Zia Massoud — brother of famed anti-Taliban fighter Ahmad Shah Massoud, who was killed by al-Qaida two days before the Sept. 11 attacks.

"Of course we were the target," said Shah Asmat, an aide. "Before, the Taliban killed Massoud. Now, they tried to kill his brother."

The explosion was heard a few kilometres away at the Foreign Ministry where about 200 officials and diplomats met to discuss corruption in the Afghan government. Afghan President Hamid Karzai, during a speech at the conference, said two of Massoud's guards were among those killed in the explosion.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dozens killed in suicide attack

PAKISTAN A suicide attacker detonated a car bomb in a market close to a politician's home in central Pakistan yesterday, killing 33 people and showing the increasing reach of Taliban militants in the nuclear-armed nation. The attack in the Punjabi town of Dera Ghazi Khan badly damaged the lawmaker's house and nearby shops and buildings. It was unclear whether the bomber was targeting the home of the politician, who was not there at the time, or the market. Rescue officials said 33 people were killed and 60 wounded.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Thieves posing as cops pull off $1.5-million jewelry heist

German authorities say thieves posing as police officers made off with $1.5 million in gold and jewelry yesterday. Four thieves in a dark BMW with a police light and a red van reportedly pulled over a transport truck near the southern city of Ludwigsburg. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Protest groups clash in Iran

The Iranian capital, Tehran, saw duelling student protests yesterday, part of ongoing fallout from footage that showed a picture of the Islamic Republic's founder being burned.

Hundreds of students demonstrated at Tehran's Science and Technology University, contending the images were fabricated by government agents to discredit the opposition, the reformist website Mowjcamp reported.

Students in the protest carried pictures of both Iran's founder, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, and opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi. Similar protests took place at Qom University, south of Tehran.

The official news agency, meanwhile, reported that some 700 pro-government students gathered at the Tehran branch of Azad University to protest the desecration of Khomeini's photo and were challenged by 100 pro-reform students.

Lightning rod

- Protests and clashes were sparked after state television showed images, ostensibly taken during opposition protests, of unidentified hands burning a picture of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, an act shocking to many Iranians. The founding father of the Islamic Republic, Khomeini died in 1989 and is still widely revered in the country.

The actions of the students show how a protest movement that began by rejecting President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's June 12 re-election has evolved into a constant challenge to the country's theocracy.

Reformists, including former presidential candidate Mousavi, maintain their supporters were not involved in burning the picture, which they say is being used by the government as an excuse for crackdowns. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Obama at Home Depot **You can do it, he can help**

SUSAN WALSH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. President Barack Obama is seen after speaking yesterday at a Home Depot in Alexandria, Va. Obama called insulation "sexy" in discussing federal incentives to make homes energy-efficient.

U.S. Congress passes $200B borrowing increase

DEBT The No. 2 Democrat in the House of Representatives said yesterday that Congress will pass a two-month increase in the government's ability to borrow, costing more than $200 billion, as one of its final acts before breaking for the Christmas holiday.

It was a change of plans for Democrats, who had hoped to enact a far larger increase of up to $1.9 trillion to avoid having to cast another unpopular vote to increase the debt limit before next year's midterm elections.

12.1 trillion: The U.S. government's debt limit.

But Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, a Democrat, said the two-month increase is all that can get through the notoriously slow-moving Senate before year's end. The debt limit increase will be considered on its own merits and not added to a $626-billion measure funding the Pentagon's budget and military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Thousands evacuated as volcano in Philippines erupts

ASH EXPLOSIONS The Philippines' most active volcano oozed lava and shot up plumes of ash yesterday, forcing thousands to evacuate their homes and face the possibility of spending Christmas in a shelter.

State volcanologists raised the alert level on the cone-shaped, 2,460-metre Mayon volcano overnight to two steps below a major eruption, after ash explosions. Dark orange lava fragments glowed in the dark as they trickled down the mountain slope.

Renato Solidum, head of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, said the activity could get worse in coming days.

More than 20,000 people were evacuated to safety by nightfall yesterday.

Mayon last erupted in 2006, when about 30,000 people were moved. Another eruption in 1993 killed 79 people. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Interim president plans to stick around

Interim Honduran president Roberto Micheletti says he plans to stay in power until the country's newly elected president begins his term. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Attacker apologizes

Man in Berlusconi assault troubled, say lawyers

The man who attacked Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi apologized to him for his "superficial, cowardly and uncontrolled" attack as a judge considered whether he should be transferred to a psychiatric hospital.

Massimo Tartaglia, a 42-year-old with a history of psychological problems, wrote a letter to Berlusconi through his lawyers, saying he was sorry for his act, the lawyers said in a communique.

Berlusconi, 73, was struck in the face Sunday as he signed autographs in Milan. Tartaglia hurled a statuette of Milan's Duomo cathedral at the premier, breaking Berlusconi's nose and two teeth and cutting his lips. He was being questioned in jail yesterday.

Massimo Tartaglia

His defence lawyer, Daniela Insalaco, told reporters outside Milan's San Vittore prison that she was awaiting a ruling on whether Tartaglia should be sent to a psychiatric unit. It was not clear when that ruling would be issued.

Berlusconi, in a message from his hospital bed, thanked all those who had sent him good wishes. He urged his supporters to remain calm.

"Love always wins over envy and hatred," he said in the message posted on his party's website.

Interior Minister Roberto Maroni gave details about Berlusconi's attacker in an address to parliament. He said Tartaglia was carrying pepper spray and a crucifix, suggesting the attack was planned.

Medical officials said Berlusconi must remain hospitalized until at least today and probably should cancel all public activities throughout the Christmas season.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gitmo detainees won't stay: U.S.

IMMIGRATION Guantanamo Bay detainees brought into the U.S. for trial will not be staying, the Obama administration is promising.

A detainee tried in this country would be treated for immigration purposes as though he is at a U.S. border trying to get in — and he will not get in, Attorney General Eric Holder and Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano said in Dec. 11 letter to Republican senators on the Judiciary Committee. Holder and Napolitano also asserted that detainee would not be given any immigration rights to reside in the U.S.

The Obama administration has announced that five detainees will be tried in a New York federal court. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Prosecutor believes fugitive hiding

The chief UN war crimes prosecutor for former Yugoslavia said yesterday he believed that the top fugitive sought by his court, Ratko Mladic, is hiding in Serbia. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tool-using octopus found

Australian scientists have discovered an octopus in Indonesia that collects coconut shells for shelter — unusually sophisticated behaviour that the researchers believe is the first evidence of tool use in an invertebrate animal.

The scientists filmed the veined octopus, Amphioctopus marginatus, selecting halved coconut shells from the sea floor, emptying them out, carrying them under their bodies up to 20 metres, and assembling two shells together to make a spherical hiding spot.

Julian Finn and Mark Norman of Museum Victoria in Melbourne observed the odd activity in four of the creatures during a series of dive trips to North Sulawesi and Bali in Indonesia between 1998 and 2008.

Their findings were published yesterday in the journal Current Biology.

"I was gobsmacked," said Finn, a research biologist at the museum who specializes in cephalopods.

"I mean, I've seen a lot of octopuses hiding in shells, but I've never seen one that grabs it up and jogs across the sea floor. I was trying hard not to laugh."

Octopuses often use foreign objects as shelter. But the scientists found the veined octopus going a step further by preparing the shells, carrying them long distances and reassembling them as shelter elsewhere.

That's an example of tool use, which has never been recorded in invertebrates before, Finn said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ROGER STEENE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Australian scientists have filmed an octopus collecting coconut shells for shelter, unusually sophisticated behaviour that the researchers believe is the first evidence of tool use in an invertebrate animal.

I Need An Angel

I was recently diagnosed with a very rare cancer that affects only 1 in 300,000 people. And I don't have very many options available to me. In fact, I only have one…I need to undergo a liver transplant within the next 2-3 months.

Under the Canadian Medical Transplant guidelines, most cancer patients may have to wait up to 2 years. Sadly, I would not be able to sustain that long. However, if I can provide the surgeons with a "live" donor, I can undergo the transplant sooner than later. And this is what myself and my family live in hope of.

Essentially, a "live" donor is a willing candidate that would donate a portion, or lobe, of their liver. Although this is a serious procedure, the outcome for the donor is that they would typically recover within 3-4 weeks and their liver will regenerate or grow back to its normal size in as little as 6 weeks after the operation. As a result, I would be given a second lease on life.

I am hoping that a healthy adult between the ages of 18-60 with O type blood is going to volunteer for this life-saving surgery.

It's against the law for me to offer anyone money for this procedure. So, I ask at the mercy of all, that there's an angel out there with a heart of gold.

Serious candidates can get more information at the following email address:

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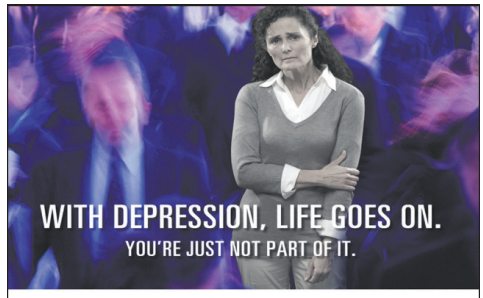

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Temblor surprising: Geologist
A geologist on trial for causing earthquakes while drilling for hot rocks said he was surprised by the strength of the most powerful temblor. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Recall issued for swine flu vaccine

Doses lost some potency, U.S. government officials say

Flu **Outbreak**

Hundreds of thousands of swine flu shots for children manufactured by French drug company Sanofi Pasteur have been recalled because tests indicate the vaccine doses lost some strength, U.S. government health officials said yesterday.

The recall is for about 800,000 pre-filled syringes intended for young children, ages six months to nearly three years. The shots were distributed across the country last month and most have already been used, according to the federal government's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Doctors were notified of the voluntary recall yesterday. Dr. Anne Schuchat, a CDC flu expert, stressed that parents don't need to do anything or to worry. The vaccine is still safe, she said.

The issue is the vaccine's strength. Tests done before the shots were shipped showed that the vaccines were strong enough. But tests done weeks later indicated the strength had fallen slightly below required levels. Why the potency dropped isn't clear.

Children in that age group are supposed to get two doses, spaced about a month apart. Health officials don't think children need to get vaccinated again, even if they got two doses from the same lots, said Schuchat.

The recalled shots were made by Sanofi Pasteur, the vaccines division of France-based Sanofi-Aventis Group. The company reported the potency findings to the government officials and did a voluntary recall. A Sanofi Pasteur representative could not immediately be reached for comment.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Availability

- Swine flu vaccine has been available since early October, and since then manufacturers have released about 95 million doses for distribution in the United States.

Warsaw **Solidarity**

CZAREK SOKOLOWSKI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Polish shipyard workers burn tires and shout slogans yesterday in Warsaw, Poland, as they demand that the government protect their jobs. Thousands of workers from the Solidarity trade union marched in the Polish capital to demand government protection for industrial jobs.

Authorities to probe witness

WAR CRIMES German authorities are investigating whether a man due to testify at the war crimes trial of John Demjanjuk may have committed killings himself as a concentration camp guard, a prosecutor said yesterday.

Demjanjuk's trial on charges of accessory to the murder of 27,900 Jews as a death camp guard began Nov. 30 in Munich.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Woman appeals to be on election ballot

POLITICS A woman barred from running for chief of her district because of her gender said she has appealed for a new election and a place on the ballot.

Elizabeth Kumba Simbiqa Torto said she wants a new election because she believes the officials' decision barring her from running is discriminatory. She said local officials told her custom and tradition prevented her from running for the post in the Dec. 5 election in Kono District, in the eastern part of the small African country.

"I will not allow myself to be discriminated against and humiliated because of culture and tradition, which should not interfere with my right," she said.

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Comment

Whining about Grapes

Doctor condemns Don Cherry for 'negative influence'

TheWestView

Paul Sullivan

metronews.ca/thewestview

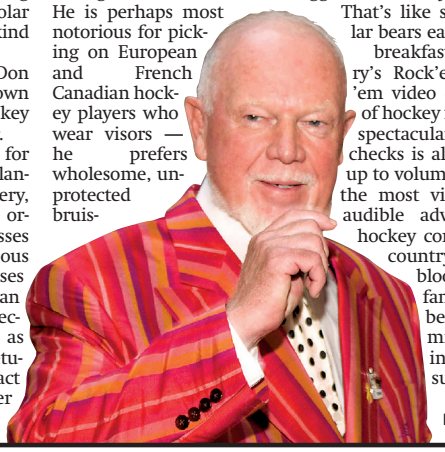
One of our great Canadian icons is threatened. I'm not talking about the polar bear, although he does kind of look like one.

I'm talking about Don Cherry, who has held down Coach's Corner on Hockey Night In Canada forever.

Grapes is famous for abusing the English language and haberdashery, not necessarily in that order. Each week, he dresses up in some outrageous clown suit and expresses himself in words that can only be described in adjectives that end in "ent," as in "truculent" and "petulant." It's a bad boy act that, apparently, never gets old.

After all, he is No. 7 on CBC's all-time list of Top 10 Canadians. He outpolled Sir John A. Macdonald, the father of our country! He even beat Wayne Gretzky, who really knew how to play hockey, not just growl about it.

Over the years, Grapes has been in trouble for his opinions, which occasionally fall over the line from outrageous to actionable. He is perhaps most notorious for picking on European and French Canadian hockey players who wear visors — he prefers wholesome, unprotected bruisers from northern Ontario or the Prairies.



Despite that, or more likely because of his various gaffes, Cherry continues to thrive. But he's back on the hot seat after neurosurgeon Dr. Charles Tator, concerned about the rise of concussions in hockey, recently condemned Cherry for being a "negative influence" because he promotes aggressive hockey.

That's like saying polar bears eat seals for breakfast. Cherry's Rock'em, Sock'em video collection of hockey fights and spectacular bodychecks is all the way up to volume 21. He's the most visible and audible advocate of hockey contact in a country of bloodthirsty fans. Must be those mind-warping plaid suits.

Don Cherry

Even weirder than Cherry's tailor ("Mr. Cherry, chartreuse and Day-Glo orange are definitely your colours!") are the legion of admirers and supporters rushing to his defence.

The producer of Hockey Night In Canada defends his "record of safety and respect in hockey." Various hockey players and pundits have pointed out his criticism of "touch icing" and his campaign to prevent blind hits from behind, both subtle variations on his general approval of hockey mayhem.

Face it, Don Cherry is the poster boy for the thousands of fans who are on their feet whenever a fight breaks out on the ice. He's our token troglodyte, and his popularity says more about us than it does about him.

Dr. Tator, you might as well try to turn polar bears into vegetarians.

Paul Sullivan is a Vancouver-based journalist and owner of Sullivan Media Consulting; vancouverletters@metronews.ca.

MICHAEL DE ADDER

Online chatter

Follow Metro on Twitter for news updates and more: @metrotoronto

Asked on Twitter: What do you think this decade will be remembered for?

TORONTO

@adsnell Climate Change, iphones, google everything, Barack Obama and tweeting

@missmelbies 9/11, social media, obama, online music (from napster to iTunes), going "green," iraq, and janet jackson's nipple.

HALIFAX

@halifaxhometeam This decade will be remembered for the scandals and 9/11

@joverm social media, the internet, barack obama

@toddns often the most recent while still in the forefront of peoples minds so I say H1N1 for obvious reasons

@themuppetsrule 9/11 has lurked like a dark shadow over the first decade of 2000s. War, terrorism fears, security, unprecedented, really.

CALGARY

@ebarbaric It was a decade of acceleration. In our lives, communication, business, even the stock market. I'm excited for what comes next

@jess4002 sites such as @youtube, @facebook, @wikipedia, @twitter. the ipod. the war in iraq. natural disasters like hurricane katrina. vampire craze. president @Barack-Obama. death of michael jackson. reality tv! holy smokes, remember when survivor premiered?

EDMONTON

@tamaracarlsonpr to be honest, it was a dark decade. In with 9\11, out with a pandemic and recession ... katrina, tsunami, war on terrorism ...

Word on the street: What do you think this decade will be remembered for?

Mike Derrada
Toronto

A: I guess just the constant changes. Everyone was all about the next best thing. Things were always changing ... Whether it's technology, fashion, celebrities ... in with the new and out with the old, at a very fast pace.

Carissa Baron
Toronto

A: I would say it would be remembered for the pandemics ... On the entertainment side — the reinvention of what an artist is — musically, contemporary ... media ... The invention of Facebook, the reinvention of networking.

William Jenns
Toronto

A: I think it will be remembered for Obama being elected the first black (U.S.) president ... He's a symbol of hope for all of us.

Julianna Auma
Vancouver

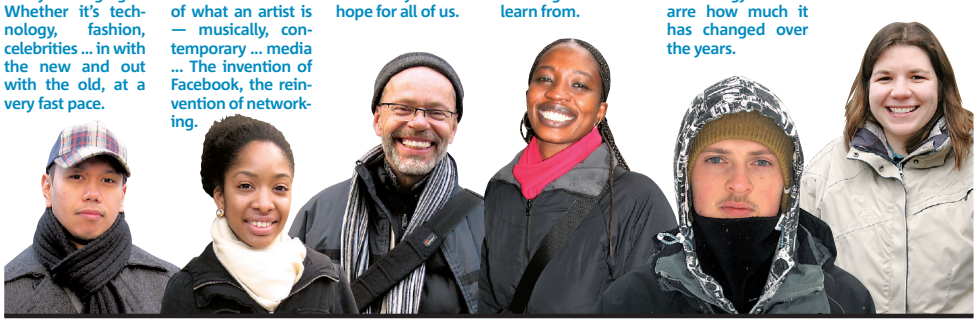
A: Scandals. Political scandals, environmental scandals. It has definitely been a decade of learning and one to learn from.

Michael Schraefel
Calgary

A: I would have to say the widespread usage and access to the Internet and communication technology. It's bizarre how much it has changed over the years.

Carlyn Matz
Ottawa

A: 9/11. It shaped everything that happened — the wars, the economy.



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LTZ model shown††

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Tech provider signs $1.1B in contracts in Q4

CGI Group Inc. has signed contracts with North American financial institutions in the fourth quarter worth $1.1 billion, the information technology provider said yesterday. CGI said the deals signed in the October-December quarter included both new contracts and renewals. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

TSX closes relatively flat

The Toronto stock market inched lower yesterday as commodities prices held steady and mixed economic data on both sides of the border appeared to leave traders feeling reserved.

"It's almost like we're coasting into year-end with no clear direction, really," said Chris King, portfolio manager at Morgan, Meighen and Associates.

The TSX has been easing up on its gains in recent weeks, and sits about 330 points below the 11,878 high for the year set in early November, but remains more than 50 per cent higher than the lows set in March.

The volatility has left some investors suggesting there's little foreseeable reason for another major boost of confidence on the markets, which could mean the gains are likely to be pulled back even further.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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ScanLife

As concern about Dubai begins to fade, worries about the financial health of Greece and Austria provokes fresh anxiety for economists. Scan this barcode for the full story.

Best Buy Q3 soars

SETH PERLMAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this photo from last week, shopper Isaac James exits Best Buy carrying a Christmas gift, a Microsoft XBox, in Springfield, Ill. Best Buy Co. said yesterday its third-quarter profit more than quadrupled.

Homebuyers still nervous: Survey

A survey of real estate brokers and agents says Canadian homebuyers are still nervous about the stability of the economy, but few believe home prices are likely to decline again.

The Royal LePage adviser survey found 38 per cent of agents and brokers said economic instability ranked as the No. 1 fear over the past three months.

Twenty-three per cent said homebuyers fear they may not be able to sell existing homes at the price they are hoping for while 12 per cent said buyers are hesitant because they think prices haven't hit rock bottom.

The online survey questioned 1,225 Royal LePage agents and brokers in November. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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- Books
- Cars, trucks, boats
- Crayons, colouring books
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- Electronic games
- Hockey sticks
- Lego & Duplo building toys
- Puzzles
- Science kits

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- Grocery & Department stores
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- Mark's Work Wearhouse
- HMV
- Movies

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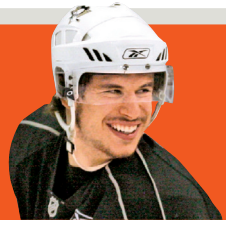
Sports



Crosby wins Lou Marsh

Pittsburgh Penguins captain Sidney Crosby is the winner of the 2009 Lou Marsh Award. The honour — decided by a panel of sports editors, reporters and broadcasters — is given annually to Canada's outstanding athlete by the Toronto Star. THE CANADIAN PRESS

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

Raptors can't take the Heat

Michael Beasley tied his career high with 28 points, Dwyane Wade added 19 while sitting out the entire fourth quarter and the Miami Heat won at home for the first time in more than three weeks, topping the Toronto Raptors 115-95 last night.

Beasley added 11 rebounds for the Heat, who snapped a four-game home slide. Dorell Wright had 16 points and eight rebounds off the bench for Miami.

Chris Bosh scored 28 points on 9-of-13 shooting for Toronto, but grabbed only two rebounds in 32 minutes. Andrea Bargnani added 14 and Hedo Turkoglu scored 12 for the Raptors, who fell to 4-11 on the road.

The Heat came in losers in 10 of 15 games after a 6-1 start, with a 28-point home loss to Memphis Sunday still fresh in their minds. A team meeting was held after Sunday's game, then again Monday, with players and coach Erik Spoelstra saying Miami simply needed to get back to what was successful earlier in the season.

For one night, it worked.

Miami's night started auspiciously, with the word that Mario Chalmers — who had been the starter at point guard for every game in his Heat career, all 104 in the regular season and seven more in last season's playoffs — would be coming off the bench and Carlos Arroyo would get the start.

Arroyo responded, matching his season high with 12 points. Chalmers finished with six points and eight assists in 27 minutes.

Other than that, everything seemed right again for the Heat.

Miami held an opponent under 100 points for the first time in seven games and held the Raptors to 45 per cent from the floor and 2 of 11 from 3-point range.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Breaking down the deal

At look at what's known so far about the Roy Halladay trade

There are two interesting initial takeaways for Toronto Blue Jays fans to note as the blockbuster Roy Halladay trade inches closer to completion.

One, new general manager Alex Anthopoulos not only preaches creativity in his dealings with other teams, he practises it.

Two, he likes the prospects he's getting in return so much that he will reportedly send a whack of money to the Philadelphia Phillies to help get the deal done.

Neither point will offer much comfort to those worried about the grim reality of a Halladay-less future in Toronto, but both offer telling glimpses into how Anthopoulos and his new front office handle their business.

First things first, the details, as best they can be worked out with the Blue Jays still deep in blackout mode yesterday:

- Halladay and the Phillies agreed to a three-year extension worth $60 million US with a vesting option for a fourth season at an additional $20 million, according to multiple reports, appearing to leave physicals as the final step before the deal is completed.
- The Blue Jays are to get three prospects from Philadelphia — right-hander Kyle Drabek, outfielder Michael Taylor and catcher Travis d'Arnaud — and once everything is done, they'll flip Taylor to the Oakland Athletics for infielder Brett Wallace, according to ESPN.com.
- The Blue Jays will also send about $6 million to the Phillies to help defray the difference in 2010 salary between Halladay ($15.75 million) and Lee ($9 million). That needs approval from commissioner Bud Selig, which usually doesn't take long.
- The Phillies are then to send Lee to the Seattle Mariners for prospects Phillippe Aumont, a right-hander from Gatineau, Que., Tyson Gillies, an outfielder from Langley, B.C., and Juan Ramirez, a right-handed pitcher.

Got all that?

It's an epic deal in several ways and it's the creativity displayed by the Blue Jays that helped make it happen.

Anthopoulos has been described by those who have dealt with him as a relentless negotiator — Ricciardi called him The Barracuda — and has shown an innovative streak in some of the contracts he's negotiated, particularly through the unique option system in second baseman Aaron Hill's contract.

Combined with the information-gathering ability of his staff, Anthopoulos was able to mix and match the wants and needs of various teams until finding the return he wanted for Halladay.

"I think Toronto's done very well," said Keith Law, the former Blue Jays executive who is now a scouting analyst for ESPN.com. "It's not a home run, this isn't a heist, it's a very good return for one year of Halladay." THE CANADIAN PRESS

The New Jays

A look at three players said to be coming to Toronto.

- Kyle Drabek, 22, a right-handed Phillies pitching prospect with a dominant curveball.
- Brett Wallace, 23, a third baseman with a sweet left-handed swing and some pop.
- Travis d'Arnaud, 20, a catcher with potential to be an above-average hitter, but who is years away from the majors.

Kyle Drabek

METRO HOCKEY POOL STANDINGS*

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NAME	LOCATION	GP	G	A	PTS
1. Joanne Doiron	NB, CA	415	173	256	429
2. Christian Gagnon	NB, CA	417	175	248	423
3. Kyle Turk	NS, CA	421	194	225	419
4. Cole Warren	NS, CA	422	151	267	418
4. Steve Ferguson	ON, CA	421	174	244	418
6. Jonathon Gremsperger	BC, CA	418	180	233	413
6. Kelly Wrishko	AB, CA	417	171	242	413
6. Paula Almeida-Stille		421	173	240	413
6. Stephen Stille	ON, CA	421	173	240	413
10. Rick Kit	ON, CA	417	179	232	411
11. Shawn Tschritter	AB, CA	417	171	239	410
12. Jean-Paul Osborne	QC, CA	413	169	238	407
13. Brian B	AB, CA	417	173	233	406
13. Claude Brunelle	BC, CA	424	167	239	406
13. Sarah Jackson	ON, CA	409	162	244	406

** Results exclude Quebec*

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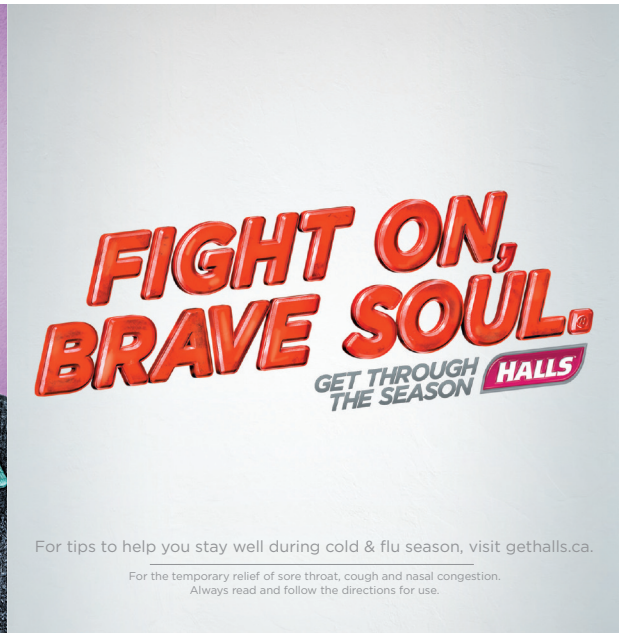

Lind wins DH award

Toronto Blue Jays slugger Adam Lind won the Edgar Martinez Outstanding Designated Hitter Award yesterday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

AHL not the answer for what ails Schenn

TheHockeyNews

CLAUS ANDERSEN/GETTY IMAGES

Leafs blue-liner Luke Schenn has struggled this season.

Around this time last year, Ron Wilson and I were discussing the ups and downs of life as an elite young hockey player. And the Maple Leafs head coach made a point that might shed a sliver of light on what's been ailing Toronto defenceman Luke Schenn for much of the current NHL season.

"More than likely, a player who's played junior hockey is not going to hit a big wall his first year," Wilson said at the time. "But I've noticed a lot of junior players hit that wall in the summertime after their rookie year, when they're headed into their sophomore season.

"They don't work as hard as they should and there's a hangover there … and some of that I believe happens because of what goes through a player's mind. They go home for the summer and all their buddies tell them they're a hero and they just back off a little bit because they've achieved their dream.

"But from what I've seen with Luke, if we can convince him to spend more of his summer in Toronto, he won't have that kind of issue."

Nobody knows whether a lack of conditioning and/or slight decrease in personal drive is behind Schenn's struggles — struggles that led to him being a healthy scratch for the Leafs' last two games — but there is no doubt the 20-year-old is encountering the same individual woes hundreds of NHLers have encountered before him.

Some observers have suggested Schenn be demoted to the American Hockey League, where he can continue learning his craft without the white-hot spotlight on him each and every day.

The trouble with such advice is that, what with the Leafs' AHL affiliate also being located in Toronto, I'd be willing to bet the media focus on him would be almost as intense — and Schenn would have the added humiliation of playing before a half-empty Ricoh Coliseum most nights.

Schenn can just as easily rebuild his shattered confidence by practising every day with real NHLers and making the most of the first opportunity he gets to return to the lineup.

The Hockey News thn.com

Bonner, Magloire may play for Canada

Canada's men's basketball team could have a pair of prominent newcomers wearing the maple leaf when it steps on the floor at the world championships next year.

Former Toronto Raptors forward Matt Bonner is awaiting the rubber-stamping of his Canadian citizenship application while Miami Heat forward Jamaal Magloire is considering a return at long last to the national team.

Matt Bonner

The two would be welcome additions to a Canadian squad that was drawn in a group with defending champion Spain, France, Lebanon, Lithuania and New Zealand for the world tournament in Turkey.

Bonner, an American who married a Toronto woman he met while playing for the Raptors, has filed for Canadian citizenship and Canada Basketball officials believe it will be approved in time for the San Antonio Spurs forward to play for his adopted country in Turkey.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Pittsburgh 6 Philadelphia 1
Calgary at St. Louis N
Tampa Bay at Nashville N
Columbus at Minnesota N
Washington at Colorado N
Los Angeles at Edmonton N

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Miami 115 TORONTO 95
Charlotte 94 New York 87
Cleveland 99 New Jersey 89
L.A. Lakers at Chicago N
Detroit at Houston N
San Antonio at Phoenix N
Sacramento at Portland N

Sports in brief

NFL All-Pro wide receiver Larry Fitzgerald has a bruised bone and a sprained right knee, leaving his status uncertain for the Arizona Cardinals' game Sunday at Detroit. Fitzgerald was hurt during Monday night's 24-9 loss at San Francisco.

GOLF Sports card and memorabilia maker Upper Deck Co. said yesterday it will continue its relationship with Tiger Woods.

SOCCER Manchester United cruised past Wolverhampton 3-0 in Alex Ferguson's 900th league match in charge of the English champions yesterday. Wayne Rooney, Antonio Valencia and Nemanja Vidic scored to ensure United joined league leader Chelsea on 37 points ahead of the latter's match against Portsmouth today.

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Good call

SFU breaks ground for Surrey campus expansion

Last Friday marked the start of construction of the $10-million Podium 2 expansion of Simon Fraser University's Surrey campus. The project will see the university upgrading and renovating over 5,000 square metres of additional space. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Workology

Jobs top reasons for dropping out

According to a new U.S. survey, 71 per cent of respondents who had dropped out of college said that work was a factor in their decision to quit, and over half said it was a major factor. About 35 per cent of those who quit school said they had tried to balance work and study, and found it too stressful. The survey's results build on a growing body of research showing that part-time students and those who have to work generally fare worse than do their full-time peers. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

Deck the halls — and the city

From coast to coast, Canadian cities bring the holiday season to life with decorations

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

In case you didn't know the holiday season was upon us, the festive decorations throughout your city have probably reminded you by now.

Every year Canadian cities invest in outdoor decorations because making the streets look good is an important part of getting people into the spirit of Christmas.

In Vancouver's premiere shopping district of South Granville, 11 blocks of primarily high end home decor boutiques, art galleries and antique stores are being dressed up to the nines with new planters, banners, wreaths and other street-level decorations by the district's own Business Improvement Association (BIA).

Sharon Townsend, a spokesperson for the South Granville BIA, says the upcoming Olympics means this year they're pulling out all the stops for decoration.

"Our neighbourhood is undergoing a simply enormous transformation. We're pushing the Olympic theme and making sure the streets are festive and clean," Townsend said.

To encourage individual store owners throughout neighbourhood to contribute to its beautification, the South Granville BIA offers marketing grants to members and has created a $320,000 decoration campaign with prizes awarded to the businesses that best decorate their exterior areas. A good-looking neighbourhood is beneficial for all business owners, Townsend says.

Here in Toronto, workers have transformed the space in front of City Hall with lights, wreaths and an enormous, 62-foot high spruce tree — the city's official Christmas tree.

Neil Weller, 63 and president of Weller Tree services, has provided Toronto's official tree for the past 46 years and says the responsibility is a great honour.

"We're very proud of it. When everything lights up it's a big bonus for us and it's an honour to be doing it every year," Weller said.

Kevin O'Reilly, 48, is the maintenance foreman from Toronto City Hall in charge of decorating the official tree every year as well as running preparations for Toronto's citywide Cavalcade of Lights celebration. O'Reilly and his team work hard to decorate the tree because the tree is an important symbol of holiday cheer.

"The Christmas tree is the centre of attention — it's the most important part of the decorations. Everybody works together and there's a passion for it," O'Reilly said.

The team starts around Labour Day, usually about six weeks in advance of the celebration, collecting resources together and sending crews out to beautify the city. The tree itself takes two weeks to decorate. Despite the amount of effort involved, O'Reilly says it's all worth it in the end.

"Watching people's faces light up when the lights come on makes all the work worth the effort. It gets people in the Christmas mood, happy and smiling for the season," O'Reilly said.

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INFORMATION FEATURE

New bridging program at York

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Toronto

For internationally educated business and IT professionals who discover their skills aren't accepted in the Canadian marketplace, relief is on the way.

York University is taking full advantage of a recent $4.5 million grant by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration to create a groundbreaking bridging program that lets internationally educated professional in the fields of business and IT gain crucial Canadian work experience and train to Canadian standards.

Starting on Jan. 20, York's Bridging Program for Internationally Educated Professionals features completely individualized assessment and action plans and is aimed at giving internationally educated professionals crucial Canadian work experience.

> **"We're really hoping to foster a kind of reciprocal relationship so that employers and internationally educated professionals can see what they have to learn from each other."** Kelly Thomson

"One of the things internationally educated people hear all the time is that they need Canadian experience — that's a huge stumbling block for a lot of people. A key part of the program is the experiential component, and we don't want people to redo their skills, we just want to give them that Canadian context," said Kelly Thomson, faculty lead for the program at York.

Core courses are fully funded by grant money and higher-level optional courses are funded at a rate of 50 per cent as well.

The program was designed from the ground up with input from some of Canada's most prolific employers to ensure internationally educated professionals get trained in exactly the skills the market wants from them.

"We're designing the program in partnership with professional advisory groups composed of representatives from professional organizations and bodies to identify what the market wants to see in terms of skills and competencies for people who want to get hired," Thomson said.

Major employers such as IBM, Research In Motion, KPMG and Ernst & Young have already signed on to advise and participate in the program, and Thomson says they are all committed to making the program a success.

"We're getting really enthusiastic participation from these groups. They're all saying this is a strategic priority for them to make them more competitive for attracting internationally educated professionals," Thomson said.

Mentoring is a big part of the program as many participating employers have pledged to provide developmental assistance to students, and Thomson hopes the overall program will create an atmosphere of inclusion for all involved.

"We're really hoping to foster a kind of reciprocal relationship so that employers and internationally educated professionals can see what they have to learn from each other. These professionals are bringing a lot more than just their expertise," Thomson said.

Candidates in York's program will receive four months of instruction in business-level English crucial to success in professional positions and identical to what students in the school's international MBA program already receive.

"Right now, the language opportunities for training are very minimal, and the funding provided by this program is crucial for students to have the opportunity to develop their language skills up to a professional level of competence," Thomson.

The overall goal is not only to help new Canadians succeed in their careers, but to ensure Canadian businesses are prepared for the future.

"In Canada, we are just coming to appreciate that the economy is composed of internationally educated people and employers are realizing this is going to be their labour pool for the future," Thomson said.

For more information, visit yorku.ca/makemore.

Mentoring is a big part of York University's Bridging Program for Internationally Educated Professionals.

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Phase 1 of Durham College's Whitby campus expansion complete
Yesterday, Durham College celebrated the grand opening of Phase 1 of its planned $30-million, three-phase expansion of its Whitby campus. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Refusing direction a big no-no

WorkplaceLaw

"THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD"
–EDWARD BULWER-LYTTON

Too often employees fail to pick their battles. Just ask Gary Gordon. By refusing to take on additional responsibilities, he lost his job — and recently, he lost his case against his ex-employer.

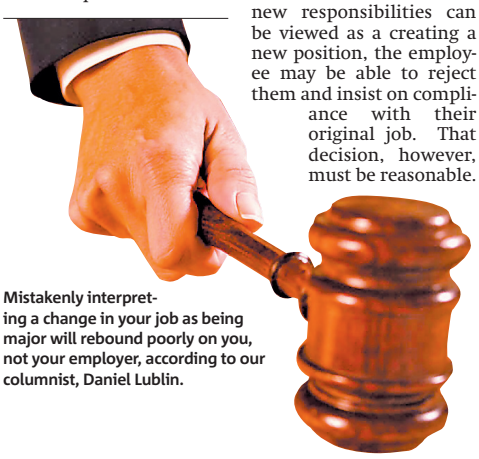
Gary Gordon was his employer's only delivery driver. According to him, he was told that he would have to take on a "second job" working as the early morning shipper, which would require an additional few hours each morning preparing for his deliveries.

Believing that he did not have the time to add to his already busy day, Gordon refused the assignment and was told that he should leave.

Not surprisingly, Gordon's employer told a vastly different story. In an effort to stem lost inventory, it asked Gordon to sign off on whatever was loaded into his truck so that he could ensure the correct merchandise was being shipped. Although Gordon initially complied, he then refused, stating that it wasn't his job.

Gordon was told that if he wasn't prepared to oblige, he would no longer be needed. Disturbed by this turn of events, Gordon sued.

Employees cannot always be forced to take on additional duties. If those new responsibilities can be viewed as a creating a new position, the employee may be able to reject them and insist on compliance with their original job. That decision, however, must be reasonable.



Mistakenly interpreting a change in your job as being major will rebound poorly on you, not your employer, according to our columnist, Daniel Lublin.

Recently, an Ontario judge rejected Gordon's argument that the new responsibilities amounted to a "second job." Since he was the company's only driver, it was unlikely that he would be asked to add a few extra hours of work to his already busy schedule, as this would delay the company's deliveries.

Further, it was unreasonable for him to refuse to comply with his employer's directions, because they were generally consistent with his duties as a driver. Gordon's case was dismissed because he incorrectly assumed that the new task amounted to a fundamental change in his job.

The message for employees is clear: Carefully consider whether you can decline new directions. Mistakenly interpreting a change in your job as being major will rebound poorly on you, not your employer.

Pick your battles prudently. The court was swayed because Gordon's refusal came against the backdrop of the company's legitimate efforts to reduce its losses.

Diane Peters once hawked magic pens at the Canadian National Exhibition. She's now a writer and part-time journalism instructor.

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†0% APR Purchase Financing is available on all new 2010 Mazda vehicles. Based on a representative agreement using an MSRP of $15,995/$16,995/$20,495/$23,195/$23,450 for the new 2010 Mazda3 GX (D4XS50AA00)/2010 Mazda3 Sport GX (D5XS50AA00)/2010 Mazda5 GS (E6SD50AA00)/2010 Mazda6 GS-I4 (G4SY60AA00)/2010 Mazda Tribute GX-I4 2WD (WVXD50AA00) with a financed amount of $15,000/$15,000/$20,000/$20,000/$20,000, the cost of borrowing for a 48/48/36/36/48-month term is $0, monthly payment is $312.50/$312.50/$555.56/$555.56/$416.67, total finance obligation is $15,000/$15,000/$20,000/$20,000/$20,000. ‡Electing to take the 0% Purchase Finance Offer in place of the Cash Purchase Credit Offer results in the calculation of the Equivalent APR disclosed. This disclosure is intended to help you make an informed comparison between these two alternative offers. The Equivalent APR as set out does not change the actual monthly payment to be made or the actual financed amount to be repaid as set out above. ††No purchase necessary for test drive prizes. Register at mazdagotime.ca and complete your test drive on or before January 4, 2010. Open to legal residents of Canada over the age of majority with a valid driver's licence. Pre-paid Mazda Cash card test drive prizes and odds at start of contest: $25 (3:4); $50 (1:5); and $100 (1:20). Test drive prizes may be converted ($250; $500; or $1,000 respectively) to credit against signed contract for purchase of Mazda vehicle made on or before January 4, 2010. Limit one prize or credit per person/corresponding driver's licence. Skill-testing question required. Full rules at mazdagotime.ca. ‡‡Mazda5 "Better Drive Dividend" is available only to customers recycling 1995 model year (or older) vehicles and who have an official Retire your Ride Program thank-you letter and ID Code. For program details go to **www.mazda.ca** and see **www.retireyourride.ca**. **Event MSRP on Cash Purchases for new 2010 Mazda3 GX (D4XS50AA00)/2010 Mazda3 Sport GX (D5XS50AA00)/2010 Mazda5 GS (E6SD50AA00)/2010 Mazda6 GS-I4 (G4SY60AA00)/2010 Mazda Tribute GX-I4 2WD (WVXD50AA00) is $14,495 ($15,995 less $1,500 Event Bonus)/$15,495 ($16,995 less $1,500 Event Bonus)/$18,495 ($20,495 less $2,000 Event Bonus)/$20,995 ($23,195 less $2,200 Event Bonus)/$20,950 ($23,450 less $2,500 Event Bonus). As shown, MSRP for 2010 Mazda3 GT (D4TY60AB00)/2010 Mazda3 Sport GT (D5TY60AA00)/2010 Mazda5 GT (E6TD50AA00)/2010 Mazda6 GT-V6 (G4TB80AA00)/2010 Mazda Tribute GT-V6 AWD (WXTZ70AA00) is $23,890/$23,995/$24,295/$36,695/$34,995. ♦2010 Mazda3/2010 Mazda3 Sport/2010 Mazda6/2010 Mazda Tribute models tested with standard side-impact air bags (SABs). U.S. Government star ratings are part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) New Car Assessment Program (www.safercar.gov). ▼Based on Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. Offers available from November 16, 2009 until January 4, 2010. All offers exclude $1,395 freight and P.D.E. for all 2010 Mazda3/Mazda3 Sport models and $1,595 freight and P.D.E for all 2010 Mazda5/Mazda6/Mazda Tribute models. $65 PPSA, $5 OMVIC transaction fee, licence, insurance, taxes, down payment. Other dealer charges may be required at the time of purchase. Lease and Finance on approved credit for qualified customers only. Dealer may sell for less. Dealer order may be necessary. Visit mazda.ca or see your dealer for complete details.

Mercedes customers most loyal: Study
Mercedes-Benz has the most loyal customers in the industry, while Suzuki and Saab trail the list, according to a new survey by J.D. Power and Associates. The study measured the percentage of vehicle owners and lessees who replace a previously-purchased new vehicle with another from the same brand. CANADIANDRIVER.COM

Metro Drive

Women vote for Jaguar

The 2010 Jaguar XF has won the inaugural Women's World Car of the Year. The awards were selected by a panel of international female automotive journalists, including Metro Canada automotive writer Jil McIntosh.
METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: KUMAR SAHA, KUMAR.SAHA@METRONEWS.CA

The 2010 F-150 SVT Raptor is the first truck produced by Ford's Special Vehicle Team (hence the SVT) since the 2004 Lightning.

Made in truck heaven

JIL MCINTOSH
for Metro Canada

If you've ever seen desert rallies, where hand-built trucks race across sand dunes and rock crests, you'll appreciate the work that goes into making one of these ultra-tough machines. Now, you can buy a version right off the showroom floor, as Ford introduces the 2010 F-150 SVT Raptor.

It's the first truck produced by Ford's Special Vehicle Team (hence the SVT) since the 2004 Lightning. And while it's naturally going to appeal to a niche market, its design, engineering and tough-but-tender nature make it one of the best trucks I've ever driven.

The only way you can get close to this combination of power and prowess otherwise is to build it yourself.

2010 Ford F-150 SVT Raptor

Type: Pickup truck
Price: $48,299
Engine: 5.4L V8
HP: 320

Highlights

- Ultra-tough but tender
- Impressive suspension
- Comfortable on city streets

Only 550 are slated for Canada for 2010, starting at $48,299. That's a lot of money, but it's impossible to outfit a regular F-150 exactly like it, at any price. More importantly, and very unusually for this much off-road ability, it's also almost ridiculously comfortable on city streets. You won't have to pay once for a weekend toy, and again for a workday commuter.

It comes only as a Super Cab, with five-foot-five box, and right now with a 5.4-litre V8 with six-speed automatic transmission, producing 320 horsepower.

A 400-horsepower 6.2-litre V8 will also be available. Naturally, 4x4 is the only configuration available, and Canadian trucks come complete with a luxury package that's optional for U.S. buyers.

The body is wider than a stock F-150, to accommodate the beefier suspension and Raptor-specific, 35-inch BF Goodrich tires. The fenders are rounded off, and a huge grille carries the brand name across its width. Inside, there are SVT-specific gauges, wheel and trim.

Inside, this special Ford F-150 features SVT-specific gauges, wheel and trim.

But the Raptor's heart is in its suspension. Racing shock manufacturer Fox Engineering created a new, rebuildable triple-bypass shock that, unlike most of Fox's products, you can only buy when the rest of the Raptor is attached. Ford says it's the first time any production truck has used anything like it.

It stiffens as it compresses, becoming four times harder at the end of the stroke. The shocks let me take it over a series of desert crests at 65 km/h, as easily as tackling a speed bump at the mall, but turned pliable enough for an asphalt ride that's more comfortable than the regular F-150's performance.

So does any of this make sense at a time when hybrids are hot, and compacts are king?

Well, no matter what fuel prices do, trucks are a necessity for some and a hobby for others, and if Go RVing can run TV ads extolling the virtues of driving a house across the country, the off-road crowd should have its fix, too.

They simply can't do much better than with this newest Ford, which will turn heads on the tarmac as easily as it will on the trail.

2010 Subaru Legacy

Top safety score for '10 Legacy

RATING The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has given the all-new 2010 Subaru Legacy its highest score — five stars — in every category for protecting occupants: driver and front passenger in frontal crash testing, front and rear passenger in side crash testing, and rollover protection in the four-wheel-drive category.

NHTSA's New Car Assessment Program (NCAP) rates vehicles of all makes and models to determine their crash and rollover safety. Ratings are created from data collected during controlled crash and rollover tests. Only vehicles with the highest ratings receive five stars.

Subaru's Ring-Shaped Reinforcement Frame safety structure forms the foundation for crash protection and occupant safety in the new-generation 2010 Legacy.

The structure design incorporates front and rear crumple zones to absorb the energy of an impact and help protect the passenger compartment. It forms a series of "rings" around the passenger compartment, providing protection in a variety of collision types.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Flex called future collector car

The Ford Flex has been named the most likely vehicle of 2009 to be desired by future collectors by the Friends of the National Automotive History Collection (NAHC) in Detroit. Previous winners include the 2008 Dodge Challenger and 2007 Dodge Viper SRT10. CANADIANDRIVER.COM

'09's Top 10? Make that 11

The Nissan Cube, left, and Ford Taurus are two of Michael Goetz's picks for best cars of 2009.

Yes Virginia, this is another year-end top-ten list.

Maybe you and Virginia are thinking, "enough already."

I feel your pain, but we must do this. If we don't, it will contravene that law of the universe, which states that if you don't get all those top ten lists in by the end of any year, the next one won't start properly.

So here we go with our totally subjective picks for the best vehicular moves in calendar year 2009.

Lots of good stuff at the small end of the market this year (Mazda3, Kia Soul, Honda Insight), but for me, the **Nissan Cube**, stood out like a psychedelic Maytag. Very fun. Very useful.

If we move up the food chain just a bit, you have to tip your hat to the new **VW Golf**, the recently knighted "World Car of the Year." Our favourite Golf variant is the TDI Wagon.

BMW X6 M — you are a totally outrageous and unnecessary SUV, trying to seduce good citizens away from more responsible transportation, so you can just … give me a call sometime.

GM might have blown the timing of the **Chevrolet Camaro** debut, but not the car. For boomers so inclined, the car is right on the muscle-car money.

Swinging back to the practical again, we really like the new **Subaru Legacy and Outback** models, an intelligent evolution of a great concept — efficient and low-centre-of-gravity boxier engine, all-wheel-drive, and just-right-sizing for a family of four.

Something more first classy? We're smitten with the new **Mercedes-Benz E Class sedan**. It's got space-station levels of computerization and innovation, but also manages to retain its persona as a fine, traditional European motorcar.

We have to include at least one honest-to-goodness truck, and the all-new **Dodge Ram Heavy Duty** is, as advertised, heavy duty to the max. Equipped with the Cummings diesel engine, it can pull a bungalow off its foundations, and then show off some more, by dragging it around the block a few times.

It's not really ready for prime time, but earlier this year, 500 all-electric **Mini E** units were leased out to drivers in several U.S. cities. We like how it's doing a lot of heavy lifting in the real-world testing of "plug ins" and their infrastructure issues, and how it makes the case that EVs don't have to look like, or perform like, re-worked golf carts.

Ferrari California

To these eyes the new **Ford Taurus** is a little too big, but we like almost everything else about it, especially as it signals a return of a certain Americana esthetic and presence in the full-size car class.

We wanted to end our list with something exotic, but couldn't decide between the **Aston Martin One-77** and the **Ferrari California**.

The Aston costs about $1.7 million, makes 700-plus horses, and only 77 will ever be built. Who can argue with number like that?

Even so, the California is so tempting with it's front midship V8 engine, retro convertible profile, relative value (about $200 grand), and huge performance capabilities.

So we didn't decide and gave thumbs up to both of them.

Yes Virginia, this top ten list goes to eleven. Get over it.

Michael Goetz has been writing about cars and editing automotive publications for over 20 years. He lives in Toronto with his family and a neglected 1967 Jaguar E-type.

Civic, Escalade among top stolen vehicles

The 2010 Cadillac Escalade

The 2010 Honda Civic.

The Honda Civic has again wheeled into the top spot on a list of most frequently stolen vehicles, but the number of high-end models being snatched is a sign of growing appetite among auto thieves for luxury rides, according to the Insurance Bureau of Canada.

Rick Dubin, the bureau's vice-president of investigations, says they've seen the two-door, sport-injection racing 2000 Civic atop the list before. The 1999 model of the vehicle came in third this year.

"There's lots of them on the road, probably a demand for parts," he said of the vehicle. "Also they can be modified, which we've seen, so they've been souped up, and these vehicles are very sporty, so they're a desired type of vehicle."

But Dubin said the real concern on the list relates to the proliferation of luxury vehicles. The 2006 Hummer H2 four-door and four different four-door makes of the Cadillac Escalade are in the top 10.

Thefts in Canada

- According to Statistics Canada, more than 125,000 vehicles were stolen in Canada last year, a 15 per cent drop from 2007.

Dubin said they're seeing "an awful lot" of high-end vehicles being seized at ports in Montreal and Halifax.

He said such thefts signal the involvement of organized crime. The stolen vehicles yield two to three times their value when sold in places like Ghana, Jamaica, Nigeria, Dubai, Lebanon, throughout the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

This year, the Insurance Bureau of Canada teamed up with law enforcement in ports of Montreal and Halifax and seized 372 vehicles worth in excess of $11 million.

But Dubin said that's only "the tip of the iceberg," considering 30,000 high-end stolen vehicles with an average value of $40,000 apiece are exported out of Canadian ports annually.

"What we are pulling off at the ports are these kinds of vehicles — Range Rovers, late model Escalades, BMW X5 and 6s, the Highlanders and the list just goes on and on," he said. "That's what they're exporting: the high-end, very popular SUVs."

However, Dubin said electronic immobilizers have made a big difference in making it harder to steal cars. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Panamera touches 10,000
Porsche has built its 10,000th Panamera, less than three months after the four-door sports car went on sale. The milestone vehicle, a Platinum Silver Metallic Panamera Turbo, will be delivered to a customer in Singapore. CANADIANDRIVER.COM

Dune bashing is the latest motorsports craze in the Middle East.

Rollin' and tumblin' across the desert

ADAM HAY-NICHOLLS
Metro World News

Every evening in cities like Doha, Dubai and Abu Dhabi, gridlocked four-wheel-drives make their way out of the city, for the dunes. It's the grassroots of the current Middle East motorsport craze…

The sick bags stuffed into the back of the seat in front indicate this isn't going to be the smoothest of journeys. We're not in an aeroplane, we're in an off-roader and about to do what the locals call 'dune bashing' — driving at high speed across the undulating and constantly changing terrain.

Abu Salaf is a stretch of desert about 50 kilometres south east of Abu Dhabi, where waves of sand rise up to obscure the horizon.

Our car is a Chevrolet Tahoe, and the only special features are reinforced fenders and increased ride height; there are no harnesses, and no roll cage.

We stop to deflate the tyres. Seventeen psi is the required pressure. Too much air and the wheels will spin, losing grip and endangering the clutch.

As the 4x4 snakes across and over the dunes, the sensation is similar to skiing. And even more than snow, the fine surface changes constantly, shaped by the wind. It's treacherous for the driver, as he has no way of knowing what lies beyond each crest.

As our driver Fouad Saimouah gracefully slides the Tahoe down one dune but, over the next, points the nose downhill.

The suspension crashes in the dip as the V8 powers us uphill and airborne over the rise. It lands on the side of a 45 degree dune and it feels like we're about tip. Fouad steers into the turn, hits the gas, and the crisis is averted.

Fouad claims to have never rolled.

"My passengers always ask me about that, because it almost happens everyday."

Top dune buggies

- Nissan Patrol
- Toyota Landcruiser
- Land Rover Defender

X-Trail has loyal fans

Nissan SUV rugged enough for any chore or trip

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
for Metro Canada

MODEL: 2005 to 2006 Nissan X-Trail
VEHICLE TYPE: Small SUV
APPROXIMATE USED PRICE RANGE: $9,000 to $15,000

HISTORY/DESCRIPTION: The Nissan X-Trail was launched as a 2005 model to duke it out with models like the Ford Escape, Honda CR-V, Hyundai Tuscon and Mitsubishi Outlander.

Ultimately, the Nissan Rogue replaced the X-Trail after only 2 years on sale-- but not before the popular X-Trail found homes in the driveways of thousands of Canadians.

X-Trail could be ordered in a front-drive designation designed for on-road-only driving, though many owners opted for the selectable four wheel drive system.

This was ideal for those who needed to tackle trails, nasty winter conditions or cottage roads on a regular basis.

The X-Trail's 4x4 system even had a locking mode for extra traction in slippery situations.

Despite the capability, a unibody construction and four-wheel independent suspension ensured a car-like driving feel.

All models came with a 2.5 liter four-cylinder engine with 165 horsepower. Transmission choices included a four-speed automatic or five-speed manual, depending on the model selected.

Trim levels ranged from a basic XE model to a mid-range SE and topped out as the full-loaded LE. Air, cruise, power accessories and antilock brakes were standard on all models, while higher-end units got a CD changer, sunroof and automatic climate control.

WHAT OWNERS LIKE: Styling, flexibility and ruggedness are among the top attributes of the X-Trail as reported by owners. X-Trail is an easy machine to configure for nearly any trip or chore, and many owners report a planted and confident feeling in four wheel drive models when travelling through winter or off-road conditions.

The typical X-Trail owner found online is of the 'happy and proud' variety, and complaints reported are minimal.

WHAT OWNERS HATE: Some owners wish for better fuel consumption.

Second Gear

COMMON ISSUES: The X-Trail wasn't on sale for long in our market, so reliability information is limited. No major problems were reported by Canadian owners, nor by the American owners to whom the X-Trail was sold for years before it arrived in Canada.

That said, be sure to check for a common rust problem just above either rear wheel.

Note any signs of paint peeling or bubbling, as well as excessive corrosion. Get down low and look up inside the wheel well, noting any suspicious looking patchwork or excessive rust.

Note that the X-Trail may be prone to rust around the door handles, too.

There were no recalls issued in the Canadian market, and online complaints about reliability are virtually nil.

A few tips regarding used SUV shopping may come in handy. Check for proper operation of all interior features, be sure fluid changes are all up to date, and make sure you're able to switch between four wheel drive modes where applicable.

Also be sure to check the condition of both the tires and brakes. When in doubt, ask a mechanic for help.

THE VERDICT: X-Trail is just one entry in a sea of crossovers and SUV's — but it earned a loyal and happy following of owners with its features, capability and seemingly trouble-free operation.

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Prius for masses

Toyota has announced it will offer a plug-in Prius to the masses in 2011 and it will be an "affordable" car, offering triple-digit fuel economy. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Smooth ride in tough truck

Fluid-filled hydro mount exclusive to Dodge

JIL MCINTOSH
for Metro Canada

You know you're old if you remember when a pickup truck rode — well, like a truck. Today's buyers want a more comfortable ride, but they also need the work capability that comes with a strong, solid frame. Dodge has tackled the problem with a new fluid-filled hydro body mount that's exclusive to the company.

It's used on the 2010 Ram 2500 and 3500 heavy-duty Crew and Quad Cab trucks, soaking up vibration where the back corners of the cab bolt to the frame.

"Frames like to flex," says Kevin Mets, an engineer responsible for Ram heavy-duty trucks.

"We used tools like computer-aided engineering to look at solutions to improve the overall ride. It wasn't a clean sheet of paper. We had to look at the current, proven chassis frame and body, and figure out how to improve the ride."

Vibrations from road imperfections affect the vehicle's suspension, axles and body. The researchers were looking for "coupling," where these vibrations meet and create a shaking sensation — in this case, at the cab mounting point.

Driving Force

"You have to let the frame do what it wants to do," Mets says. "It wants to flex. So you isolate the cab, and ultimately, the occupant."

The solution was the hydro mount, which goes between the body and the frame. While it looks similar to a conventional rubber body mount, it contains two fluid-filled chambers separated by a spiral track. Fluid flows through the track between the chambers, creating a damping effect similar to that of a shock absorber, and soaking up the frame flex before it can enter the passenger compartment. Thanks to the mounts, driving the big truck feels as smooth as piloting a sedan.

The 2010 Dodge Ram features a new fluid-filled hydro mount which ensures a smooth ride.

It's used only on the four-door Crew and Mega Cab models, since the shorter, two-door regular cab mounts ahead of the flex point and isn't affected by the frame's vibrations the way the longer cabs are.

Just adding the mount wasn't enough; it then had to be "tuned" to get it right, Mets says, starting with the computer design that assessed the body flex and how best to counteract it with the hydro mount.

"It wasn't a clean sheet of paper. We had to look at the current, proven chassis frame and body, and figure out how to improve the ride."
Dodge Ram engineer Kevin Mets

"You can change the rubber from soft to hockey-puck hard. There are different viscosities of fluid. Most important are the upper and lower sections of the hydro mount itself, and the 'racetrack' spiral design. You go from the computer analysis, and then create some prototype parts. The engineers use real trucks and real parts to tune in that final recipe."

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#Limited time lease offers based on new 2010 Honda models. Lease example based on 2010 Civic DX Sedan, model FA1E2AEX available through Honda Financial Services on approved credit. £3.9% lease APR for 48 months. Monthly payment is $148.50 with $2,400 down payment or equivalent trade, first monthly payment and $0 security deposit due at lease inception. Total lease obligation is $10,766.54. Taxes, licence, insurance, freight and PDI of $1,395 and registration are extra. 96,000 kilometre allowance; charge of $0.12/km for excess kilometres. Retailer may lease for less. Retailer order / trade may be necessary. ‡MSRP for new 2010 Civic DX Sedan, model FA1E2AEX / 2010 Civic DX Coupe, model FG1A2AE / 2010 Accord LX Sedan, model CP2E3AE / 2010 CR-V LX 2WD, model RE3H3AEY does not include freight and PDI of $1,395 / $1,395 / $1,550 / $1,590. ¥Prices lowered by $500 on all new 2010 Accord 4-cylinder models; by $1,000 on all new 2010 Accord V6 models; by $1,000 on all new 2010 Civic models except Hybrid; by $1,500 on all new 2010 CR-V models. ∑Holiday Cash Bonus offer applies only to retail customer purchase, lease or finance agreements. $1,000 available on all new 2009 and 2010 Civic models; $500 available on all new 2009 and 2010 Accord models. Holiday Cash Bonus offer includes GST, PST, HST, QST where applicable. Valid only on purchase, lease or finance agreements concluded at participating Honda retailers. #/£/∑Offers valid from December 1, 2009 through January 4th, 2010 at participating Honda retailers. Offers valid only for Ontario residents at Ontario Honda Dealers. Offers subject to change or cancellation without notice. See your Honda retailer for full details.

Parking formula

Scientists for British automaker Vauxhall have proposed a solution for those tight parking spots. To make it work you'll need to know your car's turning radius, wheelbase, the distance from the centre of your car's front wheel to the car's front bumper, and the width of the parked car you're trying to fit behind or in front of. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jane Lockhart hosts W Network's Colour Confidential.

Happy with Honda

W Network host Jane Lockhart likes Accord's reliability

MyDrive

Heather Buchan

metronews.ca/mydrive

Interior designer and TV show host Jane Lockhart drives a silver-toned 2005 Honda Accord Coupe similar to this one.

The one thing I know about colour and cars is you want to pick something mid-toned because it hides everything," says interior designer Jane Lockhart, host of the W Network's Colour Confidential, now in its fifth season.

"That's the nice thing about having a silver car. I do a lot of downtown driving and I can't tell you the number of times I've been dinged, bumped, hit, banged and touched."

Lockhart is referring to her own silver 2005 Honda Accord Coupe, which she says is like her purse.

"My car seems to be a place where everything ends up," she says. "I have my CDs, my sunglasses, all my design tools — everything is in there. It's like a I feel lost without my car the way many women do without their purses."

Lockhart admits that, despite being fastidious when it comes to her office at her company, Jane Lockhart Design Communications Inc., she can't say the same for her Honda.

"People are always shocked when they see the inside of my car."

Her career in the world of interiors was cemented at a young age when, as Lockhart recalls, at six years old she would draw houses and floor plans and build miniature homes.

"I was always interested in home design. I just didn't know if I'd do architecture or interior design," she says.

In fact, after graduating from Ryerson University's School of Interior Design, Lockhart considered going to the Pasadena School of Design, where, she says, a lot of curriculum focused on car design.

"I was really interested in how cars affected our design aesthetic at that time," she says.

When it comes to her own dream car, she says: "If I had lots of money and I didn't care about what happened to my car, I would love a Lexus LS. Or, I would buy an old MGB."

But for now, Lockhart is perfectly content with her Honda, one of many she's had over the years.

"It's reliable and not showy. And I'm not a showy person," she says. "It's like my office. I really can't operate without my car."

"It's like my office. I really can't operate without my car."
Jane Lockhart

Heather Buchan is a Toronto-based journalist who has worked at Homemakers, Canadian Living, Canadian House & Home and, most recently, Hello! Canada, where she cut her teeth in the world of celebrities.

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Three (3) Grand Prizes available to be won, each consisting of a trip for two (2) people to 2010 Pro Bowl and Super Bowl XLIV in South Florida. Approximate retail value of each Grand Prize is $10,000.00 (CDN). Random draw will be held on January 12, 2010 in Mississauga, ON. Must be a resident of Canada (excluding Québec), over age of majority. Odds of winning depend on the total number of eligible entries received. Correct answer to mathematical skill testing question required. Limit of one (1) entry per person/household. (c) 2009 NFL Ventures LP. Team names/logos are trademarks of the teams indicated. All other NFL-related trademarks are trademarks of the National Football League. ‡0% purchase financing for up to 36 months available on 2010 Altima Sedan (excluding Hybrid), Versa Hatch and Sentra models. Finance Example for a 2010 Altima Sedan 2.5 S (T4RG10 AE00): $25,098 MSRP, financed at 0% APR for 36 months equals $558.28 per month with $5,000 down payment or equivalent trade-in. Cost of borrowing is $0 for a total obligation of $25,098. Up to $84 PPSA, $1,400 freight and PDE, license, registration, insurance, duties and applicable taxes (including excise tax and fuel conservation tax, where applicable) are extra. Finance offers are available on approved credit through Nissan Canada Finance for a limited time, may change without notice and cannot be combined with any other offers. Retailers are free to set individual prices. Offers valid between December 1st, 2009 and January 4th, 2010. †Lease Examples: $25,098/$14,198/$15,198 MSRP for a new 2010 Altima Sedan 2.5 S (T4RG10 AE00)/2010 Versa Hatch 1.8 S (B5LG50 AA00)/2010 Sentra (C4LG50 AA00) at 2.9%/2.9%/4.9% lease rate for a 48/60/60 month term. Monthly payment is $289/$179/$179 with $3,475/$0/$1,695 down payment, $0/$0/$0 security deposit. 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Freight and PDE charges ($1,400)/($1,325)/($1,325), license, registration, insurance, duties and applicable taxes (including excise tax and fuel conservation tax, where applicable) are extra. All prices are subject to change without notice. Retailer may sell for less. ▲Actual mileage may vary with driving conditions - use for comparison only. ▲▲Models shown $31,898 MSRP for a new 2010 Altima Sedan 3.5 SR (T4SG10 AA00), CVT transmission/$17,398 MSRP for a new 2010 Versa Hatch 1.8 SL (B5RG50 AA00), manual transmission/$23,098 MSRP for a new 2010 Sentra 2.0 SL (C4TG10 AA00), CVT transmission. Freight and PDE charges ($1,400)/($1,325)/($1,325), license, registration, insurance, duties and applicable taxes (including excise tax and fuel conservation tax, where applicable) are extra. All prices are subject to change without notice and cannot be combined with any other offers. Retailer may sell for less. [1]The Nissan Altima received the lowest number of problems per 100 vehicles among midsize cars in the proprietary J.D. Power and Associates 2009 U.S. Initial Quality Study℠. Study based on responses from 80,930 U.S. new-vehicle owners, measuring 245 models and measures opinions after 90 days of ownership. Proprietary study results are based on experiences and perceptions of owners surveyed in February-May 2009. Your experiences may vary. Visit jdpower.com. [2]WardsAuto.com's Lower Small segment, January 2009. [3]WardsAuto.com's Lower Small segment, January 2009. 2010 Versa vs. 2009 competitors. [4]The 2010 Versa Hatch is winner of a Consumers Digest Best Buy Award. The Best Buy Seal is a registered trademark of Consumers Digest Communications, LLC, used under license. [5]Government star ratings are part of the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) New Car Assessment Program (www.safercar.gov). U.S. model tested. Please see www.safercar.gov for up to date information. ▪For a limited time receive up to $1,000 Grad discount available on select models when leasing or financing a new 2009 or 2010 Nissan. See retailer for complete Grad program details.

Miami hotel guests moved after guest dies

About 300 guests have been relocated from a luxury Miami hotel after one former guest died and at least two others have become sick since Oct. from Legionnaires' disease. Health officials say the guests at the EPIC Hotel were moved to prevent potential contact with the waterborne bacterial disease. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Travel

Handcrafted carousel rides into B.C.

A new carousel has opened at the Butchart Gardens on Vancouver Island and it's all lit up for Christmas. The Rose Carousel, crafted by Brass Ring Entertainment of Sun Valley, Calif., is the only carousel on Vancouver Island. The 30 animal rides were handcarved from basswood and include bears, horses, ostriches and zebras. The carousel also includes two chariots. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EDITOR: BEN.RYCROFT@METRONEWS.CA

5 Winter fairy tale getaways

Destinations to keep you busy all over the Christmas break

ROMINA MCGUINNESS
Metro World News

Fancy a bit of pre-Christmas sparkle to get you in the mood for the festive season?

Metro picks out five top destinations which really shine in winter.

Most destinations are at their most charming and beautiful during the winter months, so it's recommended you plan to go soon. Cozy cafes, stunning Christmas markets and snow-studded scenes are what make each individual destination so special.

Aim to visit between now and February, when you can really make the most of the festive and magical vibe that enveloped each city during the months of winter.

METRO WORLD NEWS

The days may be short in Finnish Lapland but the fun certainly isn't. From snowmobiling to tobogganing, winter games are plentiful.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Cafes are many on our list

ZADAR, CROATIA
Sound of the Sea

Nestled on the Northern Dalmatian coast, Zadar feels somehow isolated from the rest of Croatia. It is rich in history; the city gates date back to the Renaissance and are guarded by a ferocious looking Venetian lion.

Best to travel between Nov-Feb

And for full-on spookiness listen to the sounds of the Sea Organ on the front.

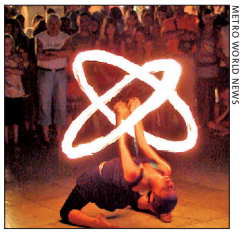
Built by architect Nikola Bašic, the organ plays random notes as the seawater crashes into the pipes.

BRUGES, BRUSSELS
Medieval Magic

Medieval, sensual, magical and gothic … Bruges is the most extraordinary, ordinary place.

Serving as a cultural bridge between North and South Europe throughout the 14th and 15th century, daily life has become rather sleepy since it ended. But, under the dormant surface lies an eclectic culture shaped by centuries of battle and hardships.

Meander around the streets by horse drawn carriage or stop off at Café Vlissinghe (cafevlissinghe.be) the oldest Cafe in Bruges for traditional Belgian beer.



METRO WORLD NEWS

Bruges mixes old world charm with a new world eclecticness

VIENNA, AUSTRIA
Opera, cafes and Christmas

Vienna embraces the festive period like few other cities.

The joie de vivre (possibly helped along by the delicious gluhwien sold on the streets) is contagious and the café culture reflects this; Café Drechsler (cafedrechsler.at) serves delicious brioche and scrambled eggs. The city is also a musical hub, The Staatsoper Opera (Opernring 2) — once the local hangout of Mozart and Beethoven — has some spectacular shows.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Head to Le Cerniers to dive into an electricity free holiday.

FINNISH LAPLAND, FINLAND
Toboggan time

With a white Christmas guaranteed Finnish Lapland is the ultimate winter wonderland. The days may be ridiculously short, but that's the least of your worries when you're too busy having fun snowmobiling, tobogganing or husky-sledding (most are floodlit when the sun goes down… just after breakfast). Stay in the village of Saariselkä; the indigenous Sámi people are amazing hosts and have plenty of fascinating winter tales to tell to brighten up the long nights.

LES CERNIERS, SWITZERLAND
An Eskimo Experience

A holiday without running water or electricity may not sound like the most enchanting experience. But a stay at Whitepod (whitepod.com), a mountainside chalet east of Lake Geneva, may change your mind. You'll feel a bit like an Eskimo once settled in your igloo-like tent but there are plenty of sheepskin rugs, hot water bottles and wood burners to keep you warm. Climbing mountains in the snow may leave you feeling cramped and sore, thankfully you can indulge in a Thai foot massage in the central chalet's Spa and 30 minutes away are the hot thermal springs of Lavey Les Bains.

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Your complete list of German markets

Find an English list of Germany's different Christmas markets and what they feature, compiled by Germany's national tourism office here: germany-tourism.de/ENG/culture_and_events/christmas_markets. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

German markets light up the holiday

The run-up to Dec. 25 in Germany is marked not just by a rush of shopping, but also by the nation's many convivial Christmas markets.

While the most renowned are the massive markets in Dresden and Nuremberg, many find the season is best celebrated at the dozens of smaller markets across the nation, like the one in Rothenburg ob der Tauber.

Here, locals and visitors alike pack the central Reiterlesmarkt square to enjoy the intimate nature of the quaint town.

Surrounded by medieval walls that date back to the 12th century, Rothenburg is also home to Kaethe Wohlfahrt, makers of ornaments and wooden carvings that are popular year-round with tourists, but that really grab attention in the Christmas season.

A couple of hours southwest of Rothenburg, visitors to Esslingen have the choice of visiting either a modern or a medieval Christmas market — which takes all the fantasy of medieval dress, customs, traditions and food and places it in a market atmosphere.

Steffi Fasora, dressed in a long, blue robe, invited children to play a game with a live mouse that is set down in the middle of a ring of wooden boxes, each of which is claimed by a child.

The rodent, dubbed a "magical mouse from India," ducks into one of the boxes, making that child the winner.

The Erfurt Christmas Market is the most popular in Germany.

A ferris wheel stands in the heart of Erfurt, central Germany

JENS MEYER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A child looks into a kiosk with traditional Thuringian handcrafts and sweets

Getting there

- Frankfurt International Airport is in central Germany, and Germany's railway system connects to all of these cities. Railway fares are quite reasonable, and the main train station in each of the four cities is within walking distance of the markets.

Bringing joy into Germany is what Christmas markets are all about, said Fasora, who works at medieval markets across the region.

Decembers are dark and gloomy, "and people are usually sitting in the house and being depressed," she said.

"That is why we set up a Christmas market — to bring the people out here, to have fun, to meet each other, to spend their money of course. This is what it's all about."

A couple of stalls down, bakers baked bread sticks in a wood-burning oven. A bagpiper in a long brown robe strolled around and children made their own hand-dipped candles.

Just an hour northwest of Esslingen by train, the Heidelberg market is set up in several spots along the city's 1.6 km-long pedestrian street through the heart of the old city.

At the far end, skaters glide on a rink below the ruins of the city's famous castle, built in the 1200s.

Handcrafts are among the most popular items sold at the markets, including wooden bowls, nativity figurines, ornaments and beeswax candles.

In Konstanz, on the Swiss border, the twinkling lights of the Christmas market stretch through the heart of downtown to the shores of Lake Constance, where a Christmas Boat floated with handcrafted items for sale. Regional fish were stuffed into rolls completes the experience of old world charm.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Famous hockey arena

The Olympic Ice Arena where the U.S. team won that gold nearly 30 years ago sits at the south end of Main Street in Lake Placid, and its hockey rinks have made it a hotbed for Canadian teams in youth tournaments. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lake Placid has 10 lifts to get you back up the mountain quicker.

Placid a thrill in all seasons

Two-time Olympic Games host boasts acclaimed ski routes

Jim Shea paused for more than a moment, almost unable to imagine the thought of Lake Placid without the legacy of hosting two Winter Olympic games, in 1932 and 1980.

"We'd just be a sleepy little Adirondack town, just a small little Adirondack resort," said Shea, an Olympic skier whose father helped bring the games back to Lake Placid for the second time.

The village, nestled in the High Peaks region of the Adirondack Mountains, was a pioneer American resort in popularizing snow and presenting winter attractions to the public. Yet unlike so many ski areas, Lake Placid began as a summer destination and remains so, with two-thirds of its tourism coming between Memorial Day and Columbus Day.

But it was the 1932 Olympics that made Lake Placid famous around the world. And with the opening of Whiteface Mountain Ski Center in 1958, town leaders began dreaming of another taste of the Winter Games.

Today the town has something for visitors in every season — from hiking to mountain biking to tobogganing onto Mirror Lake to enjoying fall foliage. Top winter athletes train and compete at its Olympic venues, so there's often an ice show, ski jumping, bobsled, or luge to watch, and the largest annual event is the Ironman triathlon in July, which attracts upward of 2,500 participants.

76 The mountain boasts 76 trails and features a vertical drop of 1,045m.

The mountain boasts 76 trails, 10 lifts and a vertical drop of 1,045 metres, highest of any ski resort east of the Rockies, and hosts World Cup events every year. In an average year, which usually begins in early December, 200,000 people, many from metropolitan New York City and southwestern Ontario, will ski there. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MIKE GROLL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paddling on Mirror Lake in Lake Placid is one of the many outdoor activities the area offers.

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Follow in the steps of the Incas on this trip to the "must-see" highlight of Peru – the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu. The trek from Cuzco is spectacular and the first glimpse of Machu Picchu will leave life long memories.

Price is in $CDN, per person. Departs Feb 7, 2010. Includes accommodation, transportation and some meals. Additional: departure tax US$31.

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tico.ca

Western Europe flights decline
The number of North Americans travelling to Western Europe declined about 20 per cent, from 12.9 million to 10.4 million, since 2001. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Flights increase even with hassles

Remember getting through an airport without removing your shoes, dumping your water bottle or showing ID?

Remember when buying plane tickets by phone was faster than using a clunky Web site with a dial-up connection? Remember when you needed a guidebook to plan a vacation, and when you had to phone ahead to get directions? All these things are different now, thanks to two forces that have changed travel and tourism in the last decade profoundly and forever: terrorism and technology.

ROBERT F. BUKATY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Online booking, kiosks and discount websites has made lining up to buy tickets a thing of the past.

The changing face of travel

Long before Sept. 11, 2001, air passengers walked through metal detectors and had their carry-on luggage screened by X-ray. But these procedures failed to prevent the 9/11 attackers from boarding four jets with knives and box cutters.

Today, travellers who forget that snow globes, wine and water bottles aren't allowed through airport checkpoints seem absurdly out of touch. And there's little sympathy if you miss your flight because you didn't allow enough time for security lines.

Despite the hassles, though, North Americans fly more now than they did a decade ago. Air travel hit a record high in 2007 with 769.6 million passengers, 100 million more than flew in 2000. Even with the recession, more North Americans flew in the first eight months of 2009 — 478.6 million — than in the first nine months of 2000 — 453 million.

Technology is the other big force that's changed travel in the last decade. In 2009, for the first time, more than half of flight bookings were made online and whole trips are booked through the web.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ROBERT F. BUKATY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seized items at an airport.

70 In 2000, 64.2 million North American residents travelled abroad. In 2008, the number climbed to 70 million and with the rebound in economy is expected to climb to 75 million by 2015.

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Suri top child fashion poll

Suri Cruise has been named the most fashionable child celebrity, in a new poll by Adams Childrenswear. The three-year-old beat the Beckham brothers and Madonna's stylish daughter Lourdes for the top spot. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Entertainment

New Auntie

Kim Kardashian got an early Christmas present: A nephew. "I'm an auntie!!!!" she Twittered hours after her sister, Kourtney, gave birth to a healthy baby boy in Los Angeles Monday. USMAGAZINE.COM

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Up In The Air leads Globes

Directors Reitman, Cameron among Canadian nominees

Films from Canadian directors Jason Reitman and James Cameron were among those leading the Golden Globe contenders Tuesday, with Reitman's recession-era tale Up In The Air and Cameron's sci-fi epic Avatar both racking up nods in key categories.

Up In The Air leads the pack overall with six nominations, among them best drama and acting honours for George Clooney, Vera Farmiga and Anna Kendrick, and nods for directing and writing for the Montreal-born Reitman.

"I can't put into words how exciting it is to feel and to know that I'll be going to the Golden Globes with everyone I worked with on this film," Reitman said. "This was one of those ensembles that we really enjoyed working together. We're a tight-knit family. The idea that we're going together is just wonderful."

Avatar scored four, including best drama and director for the blockbuster filmmaker Cameron, originally from the mining town of Kapuskasing, Ont.

The directing category pits him against ex-wife Kathryn Bigelow for the Iraq War tale The Hurt Locker, also up for best drama. Other directing nominees were Clint Eastwood for the South African rugby drama Invictus and Quentin Tarantino for his Second World War rewrite Inglourious Basterds.

Inglourious Basterds also landed a best drama nod, as did the Harlem drama Precious: Based on the Novel Push by Sapphire.

The musical Nine ran second with five nominations, including best musical or comedy and acting slots for Daniel Day-Lewis, Penelope Cruz and Marion Cotillard.

Up against it for best musical or comedy are the romance (500) Days of Summer, the bachelor-party bash The Hangover and two Meryl Streep films, It's Complicated and Julie&Julia.

Up in the Air generally has been considered a comedy, but its inclusion in the drama category could give it more weight as a potential favourite for the Academy Awards, where dramatic films tend to dominate.

It's a third-time triumph for Reitman, the 32-year-old son of legendary Canadian director Ivan Reitman (Stripes, Ghostbusters).

His previous two films both scored nominations at the Golden Globes as well, with the 2007 teen pregnancy comedy Juno, earning a best comedy nod before going on to nab additional nominations at the Oscars.

Reitman's first film was the acclaimed Thank You for Smoking in 2005, which racked up two Golden Globe nominations.

Playing a frequent-flyer junkie in Up in the Air, Clooney competes for best dramatic actor with Jeff Bridges as a boozy country singer in Crazy Heart, Colin Firth as a grieving gay academic in A Single Man, Morgan Freeman as Nelson Mandela in Invictus and Tobey Maguire as a prisoner of war in Brothers.

Cameron's triumph comes as the visionary releases his most ambitious outing yet, a 3-D technological feat billed as the most expensive film ever made. His long-awaited return to the feature film spotlight comes 12 years after his Oscar-winning historical epic, Titanic.

In TV categories, nominations for drama series went to HBO's Big Love, Showtime's Dexter, Fox's House, AMC's Mad Men and HBO's True Blood. Musical or comedy series bids went to NBC's 30 Rock, HBO's Entourage, Fox's Glee, ABC's Modern Family and NBC's The Office.

Hollywood's second biggest film honours after the Academy Awards, the Globes are a key ceremony that sort out the prospects leading up to the Oscar nominations Feb. 2.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TV series Mad Men, left, director Jason Reitman, above, and actress Meryl Streep, below, are among the nominees.

The Nominees

- **Picture, Drama:** Avatar, The Hurt Locker, Inglourious Basterds, Precious: Based on the Novel Push by Sapphire, Up in the Air.
- **Picture, Musical or Comedy:** (500) Days of Summer, The Hangover, It's Complicated, Julie&Julia, Nine.
- **Actor, Drama:** Jeff Bridges, Crazy Heart; George Clooney, Up in the Air; Colin Firth, A Single Man; Morgan Freeman, Invictus; Tobey Maguire, Brothers.
- **Actress, Drama:** Emily Blunt, The Young Victoria; Sandra Bullock, The Blind Side; Helen Mirren, The Last Station; Carey Mulligan, An Education; Gabourey Sidibe, Precious: Based on the Novel Push by Sapphire.
- **Director:** Kathryn Bigelow, The Hurt Locker; James Cameron, Avatar; Clint Eastwood, Invictus; Jason Reitman, Up in the Air; Quentin Tarantino, Inglourious Basterds.
- **Actor, Musical or Comedy:** Matt Damon, The Informant!; Daniel Day-Lewis, Nine; Robert Downey Jr., Sherlock Holmes; Joseph Gordon-Levitt, (500) Days of Summer; Michael Stuhlbarg, A Serious Man.
- **Actress, Musical or Comedy:** Sandra Bullock, The Proposal; Marion Cotillard, Nine; Julia Roberts, Duplicity; Meryl Streep, It's Complicated; Meryl Streep, Julie&Julia.

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Scan this barcode for a full list of the Golden Globes nominees, or read it at metronews.ca/entertainment.

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Mayer takes break from dating

Notorious serial dater John Mayer is taking a break from dating. "Yeah, I'm a little freaked out about dating," he tells Ellen DeGeneres on an episode of her talk show airing yesterday. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Ali Milner mixes genres

Reggae, R&B and rock accompany singer's jazz-based pop numbers

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada

As a music fan, Ali Milner gets bored pretty easily.

So when she set out to make her recently released sophomore album I Dare You, the 19-year-old singer/songwriter, who divides her time between Vancouver and her native Whistler, B.C., said she made a conscious effort to impart variety on her own listeners.

"When we were writing, I remember thinking, 'Gosh, does this song sound the same as the last song we wrote, or the one before that?'" she said on the phone from Whistler, just after returning home from a pre-Olympic performance in Tokyo, "I want them all to be fresh, different and a new experience for the listener."

Milner's motivation is clear on I Dare You. The album, largely comprised of love songs that feature her on keys and vocals, diverts from the jazz-driven sound she put into gear on her self-titled debut at age 14. This time, reggae, R&B and rock all accompany the record's jazz-based-pop numbers, underscored by Milner's sweet but strong vocals.

She can't quite pinpoint how her diverse musical influences developed. Drawing inspiration from artists as mixed as Sam Cooke, Puccini and Led Zeppelin, Milner boils it down to innate feeling, "I just get into different moods and want to listen to different stuff," she laughs.

> **"When we were writing, I remember thinking, 'Gosh, does this song sound the same as the last song we wrote, or the one before that?' I want them all to be fresh, different and a new experience for the listener."** Ali Milner

Though her ear may be in many places, Milner's mind appears focused. Lyrically and melodically, she said she's grown into a level of confidence that allowed her to fashion an album in a more personal niche as she's matured.

"I definitely feel I'm more certain who I am," she said, "(In between albums) I played at the Four Seasons in Whistler a couple times a week for two years. With all those hours under my belt, my performing is a lot more confident."

I Dare You is the new album from 19-year-old singer-songwriter Ali Milner.

Milner's performance practice has already paid off. She won glowing praise from Sarah McLachlan after performing at a children's hospital event. And jazz-popper Michael Bublé invited her to sing with him on stage at a post-Juno Awards party.

"It's really interesting gratification to get because I feel like they're along the same vein of music that I am. They're far ahead in their careers and have achieved a life from it," a sentiment Milner said encourages her to think she, too, could make music a life-long vocation.

But first, she's set on improving her songwriting ability by working with new minds she hopes to meet with any success garnered by her new album. "That's what cultivates a life-long career."

In Concert

- Ali Milner plays the Free Times Cafe (320 College St.) in Toronto tonight.

Pearl Jam, Franklin, headline jazz festival

MUSIC Van the Man and The Queen of Soul are headlining next year's New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival.

Joining Van Morrison and Aretha Franklin will be Pearl Jam, making its inaugural appearance at the fest, as well as Lionel Richie and actor Steve Martin, who plays banjo in Steep Canyon Rangers. Darius Rucker, former Hootie and the Blowfish front man-turned-country award-winning singer, is also slated to appear.

Marking its 41st year, the festival is scheduled for the weekends of April 23-25 and April 29-May 2.

Rock Hall takes chance on Abba

MUSIC The 1970s Swedish pop group ABBA is dancing its way into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, along with Genesis, Jimmy Cliff, The Hollies and The Stooges.

The list of the next class of inductees was released Tuesday by the hall, which is based in Cleveland.

ABBA — whose hits included Dancing Queen — and the Stooges made it in this time after being nominated previously but then not making the cut.

The 25th annual induction ceremony is scheduled for March 15 in New York City. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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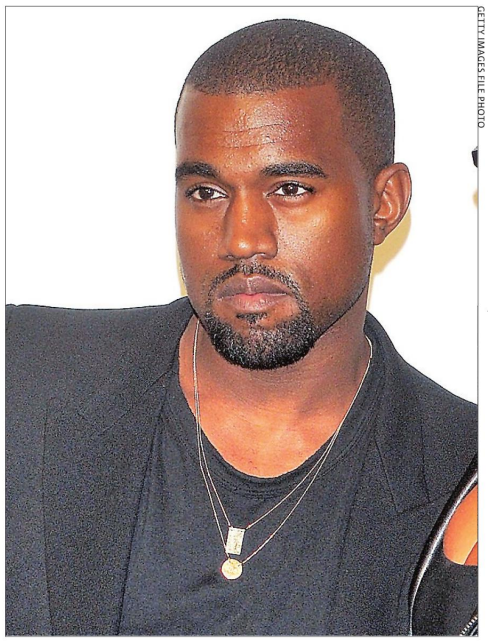
New Kid has new kid
Make way for another new kid on the block: Joey McIntyre has added a second boy to his brood. Wife Barrett delivered son Rhys Edward McIntyre at 9 p.m. Sunday in Los Angeles, the singer's rep confirmed. **PEOPLE.COM**



GETTY IMAGES FILE PHOTO

Kanye West was among some of the celebrities that brought the wacky and tacky moments of 2009.

2009 sees some wacky, tacky celeb moments

If only there were more Kanye Wests in the world. No wait — lemme finish!! Yes, West proved he was a complete jerk when he jumped onstage and interrupted Taylor Swift's glory moment at the MTV Video Music Awards. It was a moment audiences live to see.

But what if West could have interrupted those other moments we didn't want to see?

Then we wouldn't be nursing scarred brains caused by 2009's worst moments, such as: a smiling Joe Jackson hawking his record label for cameras a few days after his son Michael's death; octo-dad Jon Goesslin's creepy transformation from henpecked husband to sleazy bachelor; any of Chris Brown's halfhearted apologies; Tiger Woods' transgressions of the heart.

A few samplings of more Wacky&Tacky moments of the past year:

TIGER'S SWING: Did you ever think we'd be handicapping Tiger's mistresses instead of his golf game? Sports' ultimate boy scout became the tabloid gift that kept on giving when a bizarre car accident outside his home started a chain that revealed he had more side dishes than an all-you-can-eat buffet. From porn stars to waitresses, the married father-of-two may showed that his conquests included more than the world of golf.

THIS IS WHY THEY INVENTED THE TERM "NO COMMENT": Let's be honest — when you expect sage social and political commentary from a beauty contestant, you've got a problem (see Sarah Palin). But it's bizarre that Carrie Prejean's anti-gay marriage stance at a Miss USA pageant seemed to set off more fury than when the same sentiments were uttered by any of the nation's elected officials (including our president). Still, it's hard to feel sorry for Prejean, who latched on to the family values contingent, but then it was revealed that she had breast implants, nude photos and a solo sex tape. The only thing she wasn't accused of being was one of Tiger's mistresses. But give it time: The list is still growing.

MAYBE CHINA WAS RIGHT: Sure, a one-child policy might seem a little extreme, but after watching the questionable to downright scary parenting skills of Nadya Suleman and Jon and Kate Gosselin, maybe the United States needs to follow China's lead. All three used the celebrity of their multiple-birth children to stay in the limelight. But karma will soon catch up — in the form of multiple teenagers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mix of Six

HOLIDAY The National Ballet of Canada presents the holiday classic The Nutcracker, choreographed by James Kudelka, at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. thenutcracker.ca.

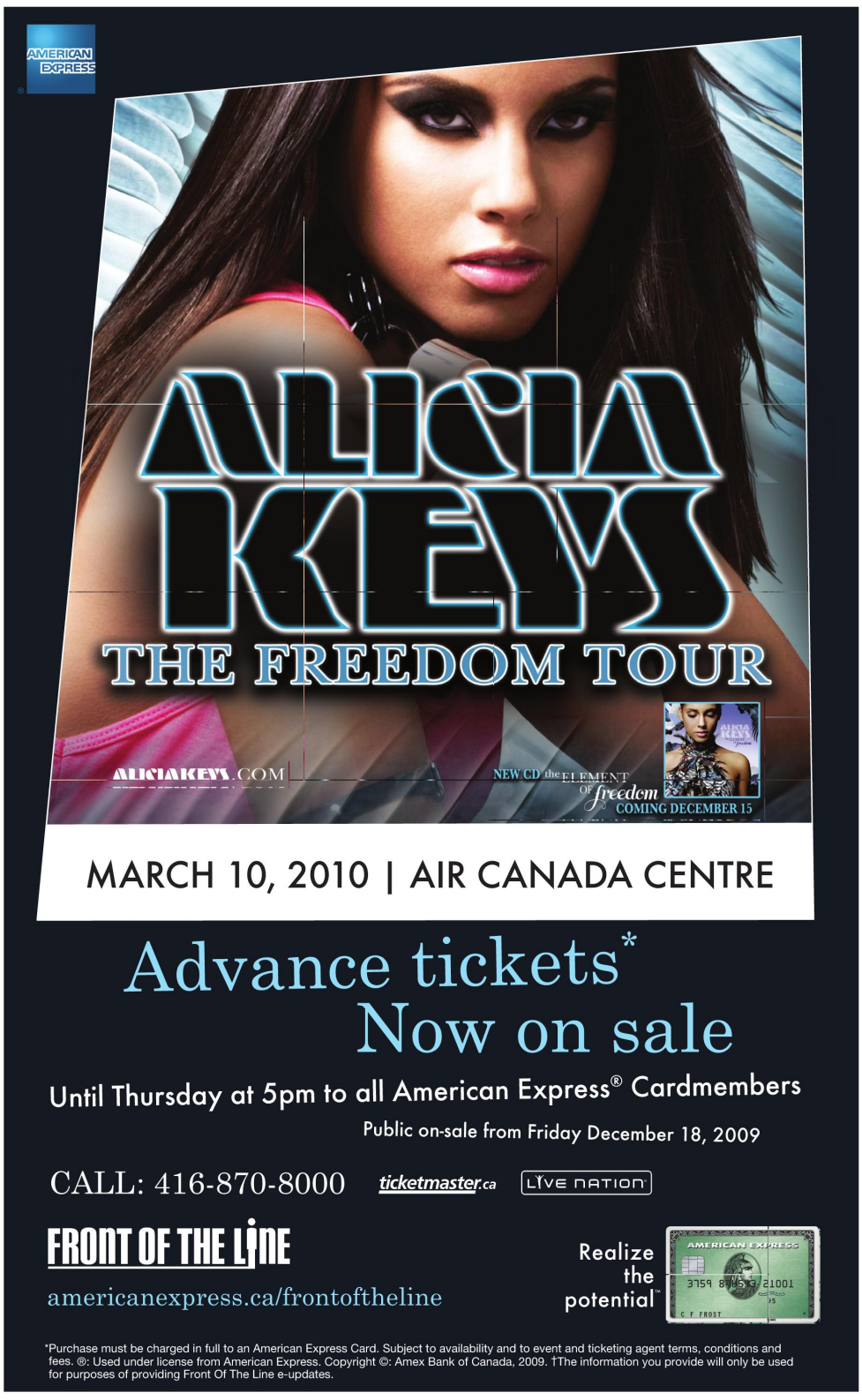
READING Poet Dennis Lee's meditations on living in Toronto are dramatized at the Young Centre for the Performing Arts, 55 Mill St. soulpepper.ca.

CLASSICAL Handel's Messiah is performed at Roy Thompson Hall by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra at 8 p.m. roythomson.com.

HOCKEY The Toronto Maple Leafs take on the Phoenix Coyotes at the Air Canada Centre at 7 p.m. mapleleafs.nhl.com

COMEDY Yuk Yuk's Downtown, 224 Richmond St. W., presents Wade McElwain through Sunday. yukyuks.com.

ART Edward Steichen: In High Fashion, the Condé Nast Years 1923–1937 continues at the Art Gallery of Ontario. ago.net



Rapper Lil Wayne will head to jail in February within days of his new album coming out, after pleading guilty to attempted criminal possession of a weapon.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Aliens from another planet

Weaver explores a very different role in Avatar from her last space-based film but is guided by the same director

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News

Sigourney Weaver admits her role as Dr. Grace Augustine in James Cameron's long-awaited movie Avatar was something new for her.

"It was wonderful to play someone who ends up finding her true happiness and her true home in an alien life, especially after my history with aliens," the veteran actress says with a laugh.

Weaver's Dr. Augustine serves as part of a team of humans studying the Na'vi, an indigenous people on an alien planet whose home just happens to rest over a mother lode of minerals earth needs to fix its energy crisis.

And Weaver relished the chance to play a professional woman as complex as Grace.

"Grace was a wonderful combination of qualities. She's full of authority and wit, but she's also a very conflicted person," Weaver explains.

"I admire women who've devoted themselves to the study of certain things or certain causes."

Teaming up again with Cameron, who helped cement Weaver's status as a science-fiction icon in Aliens, was a simple decision to make.

"There are a lot of big movies that involve special effects," she says. "Jim Cameron is the only one I know who understands that special effects are not for effect.

"He uses them to enhance the emotional story and to make even sharper — in this case through 3-D — the sensory experience of the audience experiencing the story."

Director James Cameron and actress Sigourney Weaver arrive at the premiere of the film Avatar

"A lot of families will see this movie, and they'll talk about the message I think children will hold us to this because they know this is the world they're inheriting, I'm cautiously optimistic.
Sigourney Weaver

Given the environmental thrust of the story in Avatar, Weaver admits there could have been a better place to premiere it other than London — such as the U.N. Climate Change Conference happening at the same time in Denmark.

"I'm sorry that we didn't show this at the kick-off of Copenhagen," Weaver says, though she thinks a younger audience will have greater effect.

"You know what I think is going to work? A lot of families will see this movie, and they'll talk about the message.

"I think children will hold us to this because they know this is the world they're inheriting. I'm cautiously optimistic."

Avatar opens in theatres on Friday

Toronto Rock of Ages cast named

THEATRE The Sound of Music stage star Elicia MacKenzie is bringing her do-re-mis to Rock of Ages.

The Surrey, B.C., native has nabbed the lead role in the upcoming Toronto production of the hit musical, which features rock tunes from the '80s.

MacKenzie will play Sherrie, who moves from Kansas to Los Angeles to make it in show business.

She takes on the role after a Dora Award-winning turn as Maria von Trapp in Toronto's The Sound of Music – a part she won on the CBC-TV series How Do You Solve a Problem Like Maria?

DAVID FISHER/THE CANADIAN PRESS
Elicia MacKenzie

Other cast members just announced for Rock of Ages by Mirvish Productions include Yvan Pedneault, of Sept-Iles, Que., who will play Drew, a rock singer and Sherrie's love interest.

Aaron Walpole of London, Ont. – who was a finalist in the third season of CTV's Canadian Idol – will play Lonny, a sound guy at a Hollywood bar who also acts as narrator for the story.

David W. Keeley, whose career spans the Stratford Shakespeare Festival and Broadway, will play the owner of the bar.

In the role of rock star Stacee Jaxx will be Peter Deiwick, who got his big break as Sky in Mamma Mia! in Toronto.

Award-winning musical theatre actor Victor A. Young will play Hertz, the evil businessman.

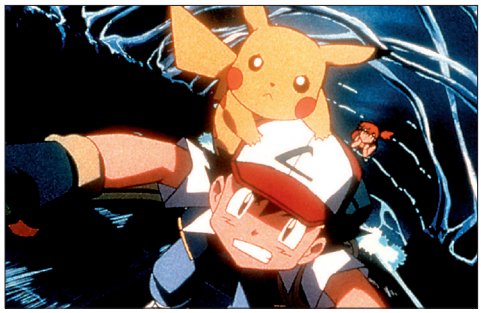
Rock of Ages has won five Tony Awards and will make its Canadian premiere at the Royal Alexandra Theatre on April 20, 2010.

The cast members announced Tuesday were found in a months-long audition process across Canada and in parts of the U.S.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rocker revived
Johnny Hallyday's press relations office says the French rocker has emerged from a medically induced coma he had been in since last week following an operation to fix lingering back trouble from an earlier operation in Paris on a herniated disc. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

So cool, then so not

With more fads than folks at an American Idol audition, the past decade has been a difficult time to culturally define. One day, everyone was updating their MySpace profiles while sporting Ugg boots and sipping cosmopolitans. The next, they were creating Facebook pages while donning Ed Hardy T-shirts and downing energy drinks.


Kids went crazy for anything Pokémon ... cards, toys, backpacks.

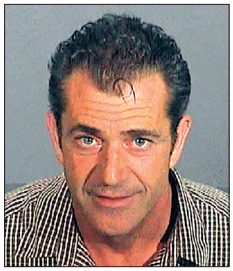
Superheroes, disaster movies, reality TV, professional wrestling and a boy wizard named Harry Potter weathered the decade's ever-changing pop culture storm while others rode the aughts like a roller coaster. Britney Spears was in, then out, then in again, advantageously morphing herself from teen queen to train wreck to pop diva within the 10-year span.

Others returned from yesteryear — or space, as in the case of the reinvigorated Star Wars and Star Trek franchises — to reclaim their pop culture glory. Not every entertainment hallmark was so successful in overcoming revolving taste buds. Here are 10 things that were oh-so-hot at the beginning of the 2000s that turned totally cold by the bitter end:

"WASSUP?" Those once funny Budweiser beer commercials had the nation growling "wassup?" after the campaign debuted at the end of 1999. The wacky greeting went on to face a barrage of parodies in the new millennium. The original "wassup?" dudes reteamed in 2008 for a viral video marking President Barack Obama's win before quickly fading back into obscurity.

NAPSTER. The free file-sharing service was the "it" way to grab digital tunes at the dawn of the 21st century. Created by 19-year-old Shawn Fanning, the program ignited a legal brouhaha with the recording industry. By the time Napster transformed into a subscription service, listeners had moved on to iTunes. Today, Napster is owned by Best Buy.

SPORT UTILITY VEHICLES. When gas was still below $2 US a gallon, supersized rides enjoyed a passionate following among musicians, professional athletes and other celebrities who needed big cars to accommodate their big egos. As the green movement grew throughout the '00s, many stars traded in their gas-guzzling luxury SUVs for sleek eco-friendly hybrids.


Mel Gibson's mugshot from his 2006 arrest for DUI

WHO WANTS TO MARRY A MULTI-MILLIONAIRE? Fifty women vied to be the bride of mystery man Rick Rockwell, who picked nurse Darva Conger to wed in an impromptu 2000 ceremony that drew over 20 million viewers. The pair later annulled the marriage, and Fox opted against future installments. Viewers everywhere felt guilty for watching the sleazy TV spectacle.

MEL GIBSON. The suave actor-director was riding high at the beginning of the aughts with The Patriot, What Women Want and The Passion of the Christ, but what he will likely be remembered most for this decade is his infamous slur-filled 2006 drunken driving arrest. After completing his three-year probation, Gibson's conviction was expunged in 2009.

MAGAZINES. Long before the world was bookmarking blogs and social networking sites, glossy magazines were the pre-eminent place to learn about timely trends. The medium suffered as more folks went online and the economy went south. The end of the decade saw the demise of publications including Gourmet, CosmoGirl, Jane, Blender, Giant, Cookie and PC Magazine.

NINTENDO GAMECUBE. In 2001, five years before Nintendo revolutionized gaming with the Wii, the Mario Bros. mastermind plopped down the GameCube, the Wii's itty-bitty precursor featuring a clunky controller. The console's robust graphics initially piqued players' interest, but the GameCube could not overcome Sony's mega-popular PlayStation 2 system.

OLD NAVY PERFORMANCE FLEECE. Complete with its own catchy jingle ("Old Navy! Old Navy! Performance fleece!"), it was the must-have affordable accessory. Now, no one would be caught dead in a "tech vest." And the retailer's celebrity commercial cameos — hey, look, it's Morgan Fairchild and Sherman Hemsley! — have been replaced by talking mannequins.

POKÉMON. The "pocket monster" franchise was a full-blown craze with kids at the start of the '00s, having already spawned several movies, TV series, video games and toys. Love for Pikachu waned, though, as tots turned into teens. Pokémon 4Ever, the third Pokémon film, flopped at the box office and subsequent sequels went direct to DVD in the U.S.

'NSYNC. The boy band jump-started the '00s with the album No Strings Attached, which continues to hold the record for biggest first-week CD sales at 2.4 million. Another album and a few tours later, the quintet quietly disbanded. They spent the rest of the aughts pursuing solo careers while simultaneously addressing reunion rumours. Maybe next decade?

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CLARA HUGHES Olympic & World Champion

Nickelback is named group of the decade by Billboard

Bad news Nickelback haters: the rock band so many love to hate has been named the group of the decade by Billboard magazine.

Nickelback singer Chad Kroeger

Billboard has released a list of the top music stars of the 2000s based on chart success, and Canada's Nickelback was the top group or duo, ranking No. 7 overall.

The list was compiled by tabulating the rankings on the Billboard top 200 albums and the Billboard Hot 100 songs lists from Dec. 4, 1999 to Nov. 28, 2009.

The list was topped by rapper Eminem, followed by Usher, Nelly, Beyonce and Alicia Keys.

Nickelback's How You Remind Me was also named the top rock song of the decade, and was No. 4 on the Top 10 songs of the 2000s list.

The much-maligned rock band also had five other Top 10 singles in the 2000s, and its last four albums all cracked the Top 10 of Billboard's album charts.

The 2005 CD All the Right Reasons, with the hits Rockstar and Photograph, spent 156 weeks on Billboard's top-selling albums list.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Alanis runs off depression

Alanis Morissette struggled with depression her whole life, but recently, she found an effective antidote: running. Morissette, 35, tells Runner's World that "running has made being depressed impossible," and adding "it's fun to have medical marijuana once in a while." PEOPLE.COM

Nutcracker sweet for celebs

Ernie Abugov, a stage manager at the National Ballet of Canada, has seen many amusing antics from stars guesting as "cannon dolls" in the company's holiday staple The Nutcracker.

But it was a cameo two years ago from author Margaret Atwood and singer Steven Page that sticks out in his mind.

Atwood and Page, dressed in the court jester-like costumes onstage at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, were standing beside the cannon as it went off before the battle scene.

Atwood then pretended to faint, as was required of her character.

Page was supposed to catch her as she fell backwards in the show that was being simulcast live to movie theatres across the country.

Only he didn't because he was distracted by something on stage.

"Bam! Down she went like a sack of potatoes," Abugov, who's been with the ballet company for 36 years, said in a recent interview.

"Good grief, this was on a ... simulcast across Canada and Wham! — down she went! I think she had something to say to Steven afterwards about that."

Since 1995, the National Ballet of Canada has recruited Canadian personalities to make cameos as cannon dolls for each performance of James Kudelka's The Nutcracker.

The two dolls appear for about five minutes in the first act that's set in a winter wonderland in 19th-century Russia. One doll acts afraid while the other is full of bravado.

Guest stars only get about a 15-minute rehearsal before going on, so it's understandable — and perhaps even funnier for the audience — when they miss their cues.

Also hilarious are the costumes, which are stitched for those standing five-foot-10 and under. Fitting the tall Toronto Mayor David Miller and the towering former Maple Leafs captain Mats Sundin in the outfits was a "real challenge," said Abugov.

Other notables who've done it in previous years include Nico Archambault and Allie Bertram of CTV's So You Think You Can Dance Canada, and Toronto funnyman Sean Cullen.

"Some of them loved it so much they begged to come back, literally — I mean like prostrate on the ground begging to come back," said Abugov.

Former Canadian Idol judge Zack Werner will be a cannon doll for the second time on Dec. 27.

The experience is extra special for him because his 13-year-old daughter, Sadie, is in the associate program for Canada's National Ballet School.

"That was one of the things that really made me want to go and do it again was so that she could watch dad suffer," said Werner, who has a radio show in Belleville, Ont., a band called Haymaker and teaches music at a private school.

Werner was first a cannon doll in 2006 with Idol contestant Tyler Lewis. This year, he's doing with fellow former Idol judge Jake Gold.

"This history of this show is so long that how can you not be excited about doing it?" said Gold, who manages acts including Crash Karma, Lily Frost and Sass Jordan.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE PHOTO

Steven Page is just one name on a long list of Canadian celebrities who have appeared in the National Ballet of Canada's annual performance of The Nutcracker.

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Toronto Film Critics' Awards

Prison drama Hunger and World War II fantasy Inglourious Basterds have tied for Best Picture at the Toronto Film Critics' Awards. Nicolas Cage won Best Male Performance for Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call New Orleans while Carey Mulligan nabbed Best Female Performance for An Education. METRO NEWS SERVICES

A CLASSIC; EXCELLENT; GOOD; FAIR; POOR

The slow death of Tibet In Song

Tibet In Song

Director: Ngawang Choephel
Classification: STC
Rating:

IAN GORMELY
for Metro Canada

REVIEW Tibetan geo-politics are a common theme in documentary film — the David versus Goliath narrative of the country's struggle against Chinese aggression tends to make for compelling viewing. But few examine the erosion of Tibetan culture since China's 1959 invasion and occupation.

It's a gap Tibet in Song attempts to fill. Musicologist Ngawang Choephel shot the film in the mid-'90s as a way to reconnect with a country his family was forced to flee when he was a child. Shocked by stifling Chinese cultural imperialism, he quickly set out to chronicle the disappearance of traditional Tibetan folk music from the daily lives of Tibetans.

During China's Cultural Revolution of the 1960s, Tibetan music was officially banned in favour of pro-Communist Chinese music. It had devastating effects on the Tibetan population, as it was through these traditional folk songs that Tibetans passed along their history and traditions. With cultural groups relegated to the fringes of Tibetan society, an entire generation grew up with no knowledge of their own cultural heritage.

Ngawang Choephel shot Tibet In Song as a way to reconnect with a country his family was forced to flee when he was a child.

Today, most Tibetan youth prefer to listen to innocuous Chinese pop music. A hybrid form has developed, mixing Tibetan and Chinese tropes, but as one Tibetan in the film explains, "Chinese can dance Tibetan dance and Tibetans can sing in Chinese, but when they perform this combination, the audience doesn't understand it." But perhaps the most devastating effect is the general ignorance and indifference of most young Tibetans to traditional Tibetan music.

Tibet In Song opens in theatres today

Despite the novel concept, Tibet in Song too often veers away from its purpose. Choephel, who was imprisoned for six and a half years for "spying" while filming, interjects his own personal narrative into the film. Although both touching and tragic (his imprisonment became a lightning rod for many in the Free Tibet movement), his story detracts from the movie's focus. The filmmaker also tragically fails to plainly spell out the basic differences between Tibetan and Chinese music leaving viewers to infer the information for themselves. But the film's failures are ultimately overshadowed by its triumphs, showcasing a fading artform and cultural divide few even knew existed.

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Moss relocating to France

Kate Moss is moving to Paris. The supermodel has put down a deposit on a $35 million apartment in the French capital and is planning to move there in the spring with her daughter Lila. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Colbert's Olympic outfit makes cover

Colbert

PEOPLE

Stephen Colbert has joined the legions of athletes and swimsuit models to grace the cover of Sports Illustrated.

The host of The Colbert Report appears on the front of the magazine's latest issue wearing an Olympic speedskating uniform. The issue is devoted to sports media and hits newsstands Wednesday.

In November, devoted Colbert fans known as the Colbert Nation became the official primary sponsor of U.S. Speedskating.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hollywood's favourite P.I.

A historic look at pop culture's fascination with Sherlock Holmes

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

Very soon, one of the most iconic figures in popular culture will be making his latest global appearance on Christmas Day. And contrary to what you may be thinking, I'm not talking about Santa Claus.

When Sherlock Holmes hits theatres on Dec. 25, it'll mark over a Century's worth of cinema starring fiction's most famous detective. But while the fictional British bloodhound tries to upstage St. Nick on Christmas Day, his celluloid appearance is certainly not unfamiliar.

Ever since Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's prized investigator made his on-screen debut in 1900 with a one-reeler called Sherlock Holmes Baffled, Hollywood has been smitten with the gumshoe. Since, Holmes has made more than 200 film and TV appearances and been portrayed by such thespians as Basil Rathbone, Michael Caine, Charlton Heston and Canada's own Christopher Plummer.

Jude Law, left, and Robert Downey Jr., star in the newest big screen version of Sherlock Holmes.

So, what's made Holmes perhaps Hollywood's most popular private eye? Well, according to a leading member of a Calgary-based appreciation group called The Singular Society of the Baker Street Dozen, it's elementary, dear Watson.

Sherlock Holmes opens in theatres Dec. 25

"First off is the love affair that the screen has with the mystery genre," said Charles Prepolec. "When you boil it all down, people are a curious lot and enjoy seeing a secret revealed or a mystery unraveled."

Of course, the mystery yet to be revealed is whether the latest modern twist on Holmes will live up to hardcore fans' high expectations.

"I've been very skeptical about the casting of Robert Downey Jr," admitted Prepolec. "You might say I'm in the cautiously optimistic camp although some members of (our group) are perhaps somewhat less sanguine about the film. We'll see soon enough!"

Indeed we will. In the meantime, for fresh enthusiasts who want to investigate Holmes' Hollywood history, here's a list of three versions of Sherlock to get your Wats' on:

1) The Sherlock Holmes Collection – Just released to DVD, this celebrated BBC series from the 1960s starred Peter Cushing as the legendary sleuth.

2) The Hound of the Baskervilles (1939) – Basil Rathbone played Holmes in 14 films but many critics say this early classic was the portrayal that shaped the rest.

3) Young Sherlock Holmes (1985) – Ever wonder how Holmes handled puberty? This family flick by director Barry Levinson (Rain Man) explored the pipe-smoking private eye as a pimply-faced teenager.

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	210	302	6	CBC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Christmas Dreams		Holiday Festival on Ice		CBC News: The National		The Hour
	214	344	7	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	Cougar Town	The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
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	575	583	38	CMT	Amer. Funniest Home Videos		Reba	Reba	According-Jim	According-Jim	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Due South
	616	521	39	SHO	The Outer Limits		The Guard		Cra$h & Burn		Bones		NCIS
	620	523	40	BVO	The Achievers	Bravo!Videos	Arts & Minds	O'Reagan File	Wingfield	Star Portraits	White Collar "Free Fall"		Law & Order
	601	562	41	SLC	Rich Bride, Poor Bride		Nearly Dead	Nearly Dead	Nearly Dead	Newlywed	In-Laws	In-Laws	ET Canada
	522	506	43	HIS	Ice Pilots NWT (N)		Life After People		Ice Road Truckers		Ice Pilots NWT (HDTV)		Outlaw Bikers
	625	548	44	COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	Name Is Earl	The Simpsons	South Park	RENO 911!	RENO 911!	Daily Show
	600	564	46	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Unsellable	Intervention	Property Virgin	Unsellable	House Hunters	House Hunters	Holmes/Homes
	294	529	47	TBS	Family Guy	Family Guy	Law & Order: SVU		The Office	The Office	*Win a Date With Tad Hamilton!* (2004)		
	576	582	49	BET	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live		*Sugar Hill* ★★ (1993, Drama) Wesley Snipes, Michael Wright.					The Game	Mo'Nique
	627	528	50	SPC	Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Star Trek: Voyager		Medium (HDTV)		Supernatural "The End"		InnerSpace (N)
	581	566	52	MTV	Behind-Screen	Peak Season	Peak Season	After	Jersey Shore		Real World-Road Rules		MTV Live
	618	524	54	TROP	King	King	The Outer Limits		ET Canada	What Happen?	Family Guy	King	King
	603	561	56	FOOD	Ricardo	Fresh-Anna	Challenge		Iron Chef America		Gordon Ramsay: Cook		Unwrapped
	261	394	60	V	Murder, She Wrote		Keeping Up	Open All Hours	*The Christmas Hope* (2009, Drama) Madeleine Stowe.				Darling Buds
	621	527	63	STR	Look-A-Like	TMZ	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		The View (HDTV) (N)		The Dr. Oz Show (N)		TMZ
	553	546	65	TRE	Blue's Room	Night Garden	Max & Ruby	Yo Gabba	Little Bear	Bucket-Dinos	Babar	Big & Small	Max & Ruby
	526	507	249	VIVA	Cold Case "Discretion"		Psychic Inv.	The Closer "Homewrecker"			Cold Case "Discretion"		Mediums
	300	601	301	M1	*Night Train*	(7:20) *Nurse.Fighter.Boy* (2008, Drama)			*Sex and the City* ★★★ (2008, Romance-Comedy) Sarah Jessica Parker.				
	305	612	306	PIX	(7:15) *Scream of Stone* ★★ (1991, Drama)				*Memento* ★★★ (2000, Suspense) Guy Pearce.				*Ignition*
	520	146	-	DISC	Daily Planet (N)		Mighty Ships		Megabuilders		Mayday (N)		Daily Planet
	637	-	-	TVLND	Red Green	Red Green	Fantasy Island		Hart to Hart		Andy Griffith	Phil Silvers	Bizarre
	605	-	-	FASH	Australia's Next Top Model		FashionTele	RAW	Canada's Next Top Model		Fashion Television-Toronto Fashion Week		

critics' corner

The New Adventures of Old Christine

Christine (Julia Louis-Dreyfus) reluctantly attends her neighbor's (guest star Molly Shannon) holiday block party, where she discovers a juicy secret about her hostess in the new episode "It's Beginning to Stink a Lot Like Christmas." Michaela Watkins ("Saturday Night Live") also guest stars as Lucy, Matthew's (Hamish Linklater) girlfriend. 8 PM on ACH-B CBS

Empire of the Word

The four-part documentary series on the written word concludes with "The Future of Reading," which explores how technology continues to affect the reading experience. Among the questions it raises are whether electronic devices will replace books and who owns the digital archives of the world's printed matter. Google engineering director Dan Landry and interactive author Kate Pullinger are among those weighing in. 10 PM on TVO

In brief

AUCTION An unusual piece of Charles Dickens memorabilia is being auctioned in New York City: his ivory and gold toothpick. It's up for sale Tuesday at Bonhams New York. The presale estimate is $3,000 US to $5,000 US. The toothpick is engraved with the author's initials. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kenya's Style

Kenya Hunt

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For complete online movie listings, trailers, reviews and tickets, visit: metronews.ca/movies

50 Cent getting his Jolies

50 Cent knows exactly who he'd like to switch places with, if only temporarily. "I'd be Brad Pitt. Go sleep with Angelina (Jolie) and come back," the rapper tells Complex magazine. METRO WORLD NEWS

Celebrity Buzz

Rihanna is moving on

STAY STRONG, CARRY ON By continuing to speak out about Chris Brown's violent Feb. 8 attack, Rihanna says she is slowly moving past the ugly incident, usmagazine.com reports.

"It's relieving," the singer, 21, says in the January issue of GQ. "Because it was built up for so long, and all these thoughts and emotions have been running through my mind for the past eight months. And now it's like I finally get to let go and move on."

Although she says doesn't like "talking about it" a lot, "every time I do, it's better; it's easier each time."

She says she finally decided to speak out about the incident because, "I wanted to move on. And I knew that was the only way I could have done it. And I wanted people to move on with me. 'Cause the last big thing they know about me is "that night". And I don't want that to be what people define me as."

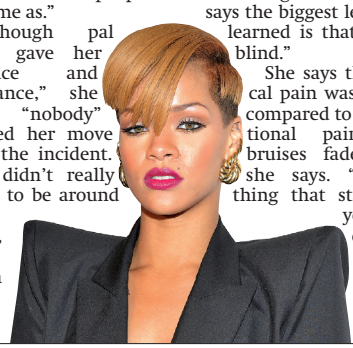
Although pal Jay-Z gave her "advice and guidance," she says "nobody" helped her move past the incident.

"I didn't really want to be around anybody, for them to stare at me and stuff, and feel sorry for me. So I just — I stayed in the house a lot. Then I started to get cabin fever. I was like, I'm going crazy in here," says the singer, who just dropped her latest album, Rated R.

Looking back, Rihanna says the biggest lesson she learned is that "love is blind."

She says the physical pain was nothing compared to the emotional pain. "The bruises fade away," she says. "But the thing that stays with you is the emotional scars."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Adam Lambert is just being himself

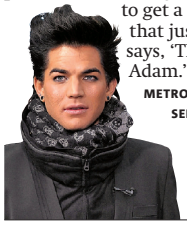
RELAX, ALREADY Shocked over Adam Lambert's recent performance antics? Don't be, says American Idol winner Kris Allen, because there is more to come, people com reports.

"Yeah, that's who he is," Allen saya. "Obviously, he couldn't do that stuff on Idol. And so you're getting to see the real Adam now."

Lambert caused an uproar for his sexually charged performance on the American Music Awards last month, which led ABC to cancel his scheduled New Year's Eve appearance on Jimmy Kimmel Live and his performance on Good Morning America. He was allowed to appear on The View.

"I thought it was Adam being Adam," Allen says of Lambert's AMA performance. "I'm going to get a shirt that just says, 'That's Adam.'"

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Lindsay Lohan's dad arrested

NATURE OR NURTURE? BOTH Repeat offender Michael Lohan was arrested earlier this week after violating a restraining order taken out by ex-girlfriend Erin Muller, according to TMZ. Michael Lohan was charged with criminal contempt of court by violating an order restricting him from "trying to communicate by phone."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Nicole won't live in Oz

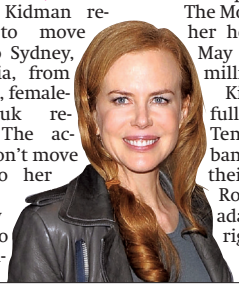
OH TENNESSEE, MY TENNESSEE Nicole Kidman refuses to move back to Sydney, Australia, from the U.S., femalefirst.co.uk reports. The actress won't move back to her native country due to the constant paparazzi hounding. The Moulin Rouge star sold her home in the city in May (for around $10.5 million US).

Kidman now lives full-time in Nashville, Tenn., with her husband Keith Urban and their daughter Sunday Rose. The star is adamant she made the right decision.

She says, "It (media attention) makes certain cities impossible to live in. Like Sydney, it makes it impossible for us to live there.

"We certainly don't get that treatment in Tennessee. But it goes with the territory. It's just, we have to be careful, just to maintain some sort of semblance of a normal life for our child."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Courtney loses Frances

POOR KID Courtney Love has lost custody of her daughter with the late Kurt Cobain, Frances Bean Cobain, according to People magazine. A California court has appointed Wendy O'Connor and Kimberly Cobain, the 17-year-old girl's grandmother and aunt, her legal guardians, and the two women now have authority over the Frances Bean's education, health care and living situation.

A reason for the change in custody wasn't given. "This doesn't necessarily mean that Courtney Love is an unfit mother and has completely lost custody," a legal expert tells the magazine.

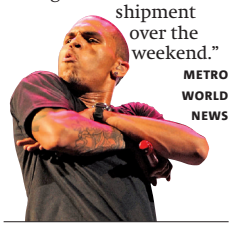
METRO WORLD NEWS

Chris Brown flies the Twitter coup

NO MORE TWEETS Just days after using Twitter to blast Walmart and other retailers for apparently refusing to carry his new album, Chris Brown has cancelled his account with the microblogging site.

The sudden departure comes after Walmart released a statement addressing his complaints saying, "We are surprised at the comments online. All Walmart stores nationwide have carried the CD since its release, including the Wallingford store mentioned in the post. This store actually sold through its initial shipment over the weekend."

METRO WORLD NEWS



Celebrity tweets

Stephen Fry can't resist a bad pun, Sandra Bernhard is politically motivated, Nick Cannon is a frequent flyer and Rainn Wilson really needs to get off Twitter.

• @stephenfry Busy in studio all morning voicing narration for a 5 part doc on Delia. Fingering a Shetland. (Feeling a little horse/hoarse geddit? Lol)

• @SandraBernhard up and I mean up. Thinking about joe leiberman, he really touches me and that makes me violent.

• @NickCannon Just landed back in ny. Just for the day. Time to grind, then back to La tonight. Let's get it!

• @rainnwilson I had a dream where I twittered about a dream I was having.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Whitney Houston likes to keep it subtle

SHE'S FAMOUS FOR IT, RIGHT? Whitney Houston says less is more, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The singer places great importance in not revealing too much flesh, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

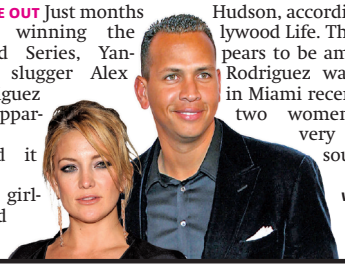
She told America's InStyle magazine, "A smile, a little glance, the way you lean back says sexy without being too open or offending anyone. Because once they've seen it all, they go, 'Man, I'm bored with that,' instead of 'Hmm, what's she going to do now?'"

METRO WORLD NEWS

Alex and Kate plus an amicable break

STRIKE OUT Just months after winning the World Series, Yankees slugger Alex Rodriguez has apparently called it quits with girlfriend Kate Hudson, according to Hollywood Life. The split appears to be amicable, as Rodriguez was spotted in Miami recently "with two women, acting very single," a source says.

METRO WORLD NEWS



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Today 60% Flurries -2° / -11°

Thursday Partly sunny -5° / -8°

Friday Variable -2° / -8°

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Take Five

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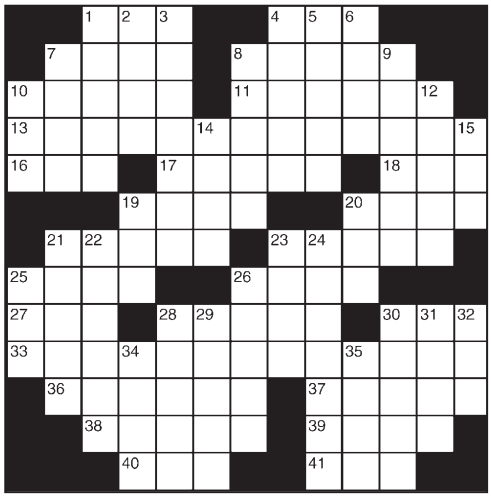


Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

	4							2
		9	1					
2		8		7	4			5
					3		8	1
		4		1		7		
6	3		8					
9			7	5		8		3
					6	9		
8							5	

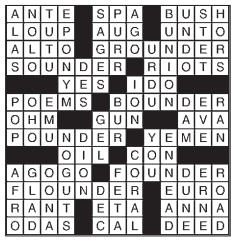
ACROSS

1 Massage
4 Acorn producer
7 Parsley partner
8 "Sesame Street" character
10 Chamberlain nickname
11 Experts
13 Property of uranium, e.g.
16 Officeholders
17 Prepare to propose
18 "Golly!"
19 Apportion (out)
20 Writer Kingsley
21 Backbone
23 "I Know Who Killed Me" actress
25 Noisy
26 Broomcloset items
27 Dadaist painter
28 Spingarn Medal org.
30 Blackjack part
33 13-Across detector
36 Drool
37 Crystal-lined rock
38 Recording artist?
39 Title
40 Mound stat
41 Rds.

DOWN

1 Incursions
2 Wrinkly citrus
3 Give evidence of
4 Give a speech
5 Tiny bone in the ear
6 Chicken —
7 Ollie's pal
8 Host
9 Baffler
10 Lanka lead-in
12 Oktoberfest souvenir
14 Chip in a chip
15 "Certainly"
19 Central
20 Oohs' mates
21 Sensitive spots
22 Students
23 Crazy
24 Calls into question
25 Trail behind
26 PC user's shortcut
28 When pigs fly
29 Action venue
30 Fermi's particles
31 Relinquish
32 Before
34 Fence entry
35 Tidy

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:



4	5	3	7	6	2	1	9	8
2	9	6	1	4	8	7	5	3
7	8	1	5	3	9	6	4	2
6	2	8	3	9	5	4	7	1
3	4	5	8	7	1	2	6	9
1	7	9	6	2	4	3	8	5
8	3	4	2	5	7	9	1	6
9	1	2	4	8	6	5	3	7
5	6	7	9	1	3	8	2	4

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca

Metro Recipe of the Day

Rosemary-glazed Lamb Chops

INGREDIENTS:

2 tbsp (25 mL) currant jelly
2 tsp (10 mL) Dijon mustard
4 tsp (20 mL) chopped fresh rosemary leaves
4 lean lamb loin chops
3-4 tbsp (45-60 mL) olive oil
1 eggplant, thickly sliced
8 slices ciabatta bread

METHOD:

1. In small pot, mix currant jelly, mustard and rosemary. Preheat broiler to high.
2. Put lamb chops on grill rack, brush with oil, then season. Arrange eggplant slices on grill rack, brushing with oil. Broil 6-8 minutes, turning lamb once and eggplant slices occasionally, until golden.
3. Gently heat glaze, then brush some over lamb. Broil further 2 minutes. Turn lamb over and glaze other side. Cook 1-2 more minutes.
4. Meanwhile, brush ciabatta slices with some oil and add to grill rack. Broil ciabatta until golden on both sides.
5. Heat remaining glaze until almost boiling. Put lamb and eggplant on serving plates, then spoon hot glaze over lamb. Serve with ciabatta.

SERVES 4

rd.ca

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to rd.ca or check out Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES ♈
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
If you get the urge to try something different today just go ahead and do it and don't waste a second worrying what other people might say.

TAURUS ♉
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Don't pull your punches today. Let those around you know why you are not amused at what's being going on.

GEMINI ♊
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Cosmic activity in your opposite sign means the ball is in your opponent's court at the moment and all you can do is wait.

CANCER ♋
JUNE 22-JULY 22
You will work hard and get twice as much done as usual today, but you must also take time out to ask yourself.

LEO ♌
JULY 23-AUG 23
Whatever you start over the next 24 hours will bring success at some stage in the near future, so make it something you can look back on with pride.

VIRGO ♍
AUG 24-SEPT 22
You can be a bit critical at times, and usually with good reason, but this is not the right time to go big on the negative comments.

LIBRA ♎
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Be careful what you ask for because if someone does you a favor now you will be expected to do them a favor in the future.

SCORPIO ♏
OCT 24-NOV 22
With Scorpio everything revolves around passion, so make sure what you start today is something you will want to continue.

SAGITTARIUS ♐
NOV 23-DEC 21
Today's new moon in your sign guarantees that your current efforts will meet with the kind of success not even your mind could imagine.

CAPRICORN ♑
DEC 22-JAN 20
Today's new moon in the most sensitive area of your chart won't let you get away with any kind of self-deception. Know yourself.

AQUARIUS ♒
JAN 21-FEB 18
You usually get what you want in the long-term but today others will hand things to you without even being asked.

PISCES ♓
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Believe it or not you are negotiating from a position of strength on the work front, so don't accept less than you are worth.

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This day in history

1431: Henry VI of England is crowned King of France at Notre Dame in Paris.
1907: The Great White Fleet begins its circumnavigation of the world.
1942: Holocaust: Porajmos – Heinrich Himmler orders that Roma candidates for extermination be deported to Auschwitz.
1945: Thailand joins the United Nations.
1985: Mafia: In New York City, Paul Castellano and Thomas Bilotti are shot dead on the orders of John Gotti, who assumes leadership of the Gambino family.

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*Base MSRP for a new 2010 Tiguan 2.0L / 3-door new Golf 2.5L / 5-door new Golf 2.5L / Golf City 2.0L with 6-speed manual transmission / 5-speed manual transmission / 5-speed manual transmission / 5-speed manual transmission is $27,875/$20,175/$21,175/$15,300 excluding $1,580 freight and PDI for Tiguan and $1,365 freight and PDI for 3-door new Golf 2.5L / 5-door new Golf 2.5L / Golf City 2.0L, license, insurance, registration, any dealer or other charges, options and applicable taxes. Dealer may sell for less. Limited time finance offer available through Volkswagen Finance, on approved credit. MSRP for a new 2010 Tiguan 2.0L / 3-door new Golf 2.5L / 5-door new Golf 2.5L / Golf City 2.0L with 6-speed manual transmission / 5-speed manual transmission / 5-speed manual transmission / 5-speed manual transmission financed at 0% APR up to 36 months equals $774/$560/$588/$425 per month. Dealer may sell for less. Down payment or equivalent trade-in, due at signing, may be required. Cost of borrowing is $0 for a total obligation of $27,875/$20,175/$21,175/$15,300. $1,580 freight and PDI for Tiguan and $1,365 freight and PDI for 3-door new Golf 2.5L / 5-door new Golf 2.5L / Golf City 2.0L, PPSA, license, insurance, registration, any dealer or other charges, options, and other applicable taxes are extra. Offer ends January 4, 2010 and is subject to change or cancellation without notice. 2010 Tiguan 2.0L / 3-door new Golf 2.5L / 5-door new Golf 2.5L / Golf City 2.0L as shown is $33,925/$23,900/$26,475/$17,336 with options and accessories. Visit vw.ca or your Volkswagen dealer for details. **Volkswagen recommends keeping the ESP on under most driving conditions. †Airbags are supplemental restraints only and will not deploy under all accident scenarios. Always use safety belts and seat children only in the rear seats, using restraint systems appropriate for their size and age. Visit vw.ca or your Volkswagen dealer for details. "Volkswagen", the Volkswagen logo, "Tiguan" and "Golf" are registered trademarks of Volkswagen AG. "Das Auto & Design" and "Golf City" are trademarks of Volkswagen AG. © 2009 Volkswagen Canada.

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EX MODEL SHOWN

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HWY: 6.3 L/100KM 45 MPG CITY: 7.7 L/100KM 37 MPG

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$500 Grad Rebate

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*MSRP for 2010 Forte Koup 2.0L LX MT (FO521A)/2010 Soul 1.6L MT (SO550A) is $18,495/$15,795. Delivery and destination fees of $1,455/$1,650 excluded. **Cash purchase price for 2010 Forte 2.0L LX MT (FO540A) is $14,745 and includes a cash rebate of $950 based on an MSRP of $15,695. Delivery and destination fees of $1,455 excluded. **Bi-weekly finance payment for 2010 Rio EX MT (RO542A) is $72 with an APR of 3.9% for 60 months, amortized over an 84-month period. Estimated remaining principal balance of $3,610 plus applicable taxes due at end of 60-month period. Delivery and destination fees of $1,455 excluded. ◆Monthly lease payment for 2010 Forte Koup 2.0L EX MT (FO521A)/2010 Soul 1.6L MT (SO550A) is $199/$199 for 60/48 months at 3.9%/3.9% lease APR with a $2,940/$1,880 down payment. Total lease obligation is $14,909/$11,455 with the option to purchase at end of term for $5,663/$5,882. Delivery and destination fees of $1,455/$1,650 excluded. License, registration, insurance, dealer administration fees and taxes are excluded. Lease has 20,000 km/year allowance (other packages available) and 0.10¢/km for excess. Other lease and finance options also available. Dealers are free to set individual prices. Prices subject to change without notice. Certain restrictions may apply. ❖"Zero Payments until Spring" (90 day payment deferral) applies to purchase financing offers on all new 2009 and 2010 Kia models. No interest will accrue during the first 60 days of the finance contract. After this period, interest starts to accrue and the purchaser will repay principal and interest monthly over the term of the contract. ◇Receive a prepaid Visa card worth up to $1,000 to keep extra cash handy this holiday season. The prepaid Visa card values of $300, $500 and $1,000 are on cash purchase, lease or loan, or applied as a credit towards the listed cash purchase price at time of purchase. $300 cards are available on 2010 Forte sedan, 2010 Forte Koup, 2010 Rio/Rio5 and 2010 Soul. $500 cards are available on all 2009 vehicles, 2010 Rondo, 2010 Magentis and 2010 Sportage. $1,000 cards are available on 2010 Borrego and 2010 Sedona. §Kia's Integrity Advantage is underwritten by Echelon General Insurance Company and is valid on any new Kia model financed or leased through an authorized Kia dealer, for up to one year after purchase, and covers negative equity up to $7,500. Please refer to your Kia Integrity Advantage insurance policy document for full terms and conditions. Only available at participating dealers. Restrictions apply. Coverage options vary by province. See your participating Kia dealer for details. The Echelon General Insurance Company logo is a Registered Trademark of Echelon General Insurance Company. †NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) test results. Visit www.safercar.gov for full details. ❖Visit kbb.com for full details. Kelley Blue Book® is a registered trademark of Kelley Blue Book Co., Inc. ◆2010 Soul 1.6L MT is 6.3 L (45 MPG)/7.7 L (37 MPG) per 100km. The actual fuel consumption of these vehicles may vary. These estimates are based on the Government of Canada's approved criteria and testing methods. Refer to the Government of Canada publication EnerGuide Fuel Consumption Guide. ▼Kia's "Worry-Free Comprehensive" warranty covers most vehicle components against defects occurring under normal use and maintenance conditions. ★Bluetooth® technology enabled cell phone required. The Bluetooth® word mark and logo are registered trademarks and are owned by Bluetooth SIG, Inc. Price, availability and specifications are subject to changes without notice. Some vehicles advertised may include optional accessories or after-sale equipment and may not be exactly as shown. Information in this advertisement is believed to be accurate at the time of print. Offer ends January 4, 2010 and is valid for residents of Ontario and Manitoba only. KIA is a trademark of Kia Motors Corporation.